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INTERVIEW ON PG. 6

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CIVIL SOCIETY INCLUDES EVERYONE

PA Youth Congress fighting on many fronts

By Frank Pizzoli

When you land on their web page the first words you see are - *Speaking our truth to power.*

The PA Youth Congress, under the direction of Jason Landau Goodman, has been involved in many of Pennsylvania's queer battles.

Founded in 2011, PYC's framework and values come directly from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the leading youth arm of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. As explained on their web site, the organization explicitly works to support an inclusive and affirming youth community where all young leaders can efficiently communicate and collaborate.

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos

PHOTO | GAGE SKIDMORE

When US Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recently visited a Harrisburg school, Goodman said in a news release: "We know that our state legislators care about all Pennsylvanians, but by allowing public funding to flow to institutions that explicitly ban LGBT children and youth, they are reinforcing the cruelty of discrimination in public accommodations."

He was referring to a visit by DeVos to Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School, part of her tour promoting a proposed federal

Please see **PA YOUTH,** page **21**

WISHING YOU A PEACEFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Are LGBT employees safe?

Supreme Court case will decide

AN ANALYSIS BY LANCASTER ATTORNEY SHARON LOPEZ

Editor' note: Sharon Lopez, a Lancaster-based civil right attorney, was in the US Supreme Court Oct. 8 when the nation's highest court heard three LGBT employment cases. She analyzes for The Central Voice readers the workings of the day. In a previous article (www.thecentralvoice.com/stories/us-supreme-court-hears-lgbt-employment-discrimination-cases,2530?), Lopez provides more detail. This analysis begins with Lopez's profound quote from Chief Justice Roberts: "The cases are submitted." Final decisions on the cases are forecast to be issued sometime in late June.

"It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer...to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's...sex"

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act

Background

Three arguments were held in two hours. The Solicitor General supports the employer's position in all three cases. The lead appellate oral advocates for the gay and transgendered litigants were David Cole, the national legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Pamela Karlan, the Stanford University law professor.

Lopez's Analysis

In a previous article I explained the cases in more detail, but the bottom line question for the Justices was whether Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which states "It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer … to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's … sex," prohibits discrimination of gays, lesbians, and transgender people." Isn't sex stereotyping, which expects

Please see **LGBT EMPLOYEES,** page **19**

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FHCCP
Family Health Council of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.

INTERNATIONAL

CZECH REPUBLIC

Same-sex marriage rally

An international conference on marriage equality took place recently in the Czech Republic as the nation's Senate considered a marriage-equality measure. If passed, the Czech Republic would be the first ex-Eastern Bloc state to permit same-sex marriage. Several hundred people gathered in the center of Prague recently to demonstrate support for a bill that would permit same-sex marriage in the Czech Republic. The event in the Lesser Town was organized by the NGO We Are Fair! which has criticized the fact that, although the bill was submitted more than a year ago, the Chamber of Deputies has so far failed to debate it. | WE ARE FAIR PHOTO

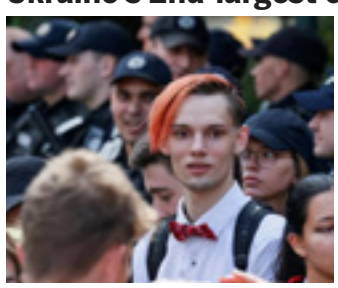
SERBIA

Serbian PM attends LGBT parade

Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic, left, and her partner Milica Djurdjic participate in the annual pride march in Belgrade, Serbia. Thousands joined the annual gay pride parade in Serbia's capital, Belgrade, on September 15. Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic, who is a lesbian, attended with her partner.
Before the parade started, more than 100 far-right activists gathered, some holding Orthodox Christian banners and crosses and singing religious songs. Police scuffled with several after they refused to move from the route of the march, and at least five people were detained. | RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY PHOTO

UKRAINE

Ukraine's 2nd-largest city holds 1st March



Thousands of gay and lesbian activists and supporters paraded in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, marking the city's first pride march. Scuffles broke out toward the end of the September 15 march, with right-wing demonstrators clashing briefly with police in a nearby park. Two police officers were treated for exposure to tear gas or pepper spray, authorities said, and 17 people were detained as a result. Three of them were arrested for threatening or violence against a law enforcement officer. Two are aged 23 and one is 21 and are accused of spraying tear gas at police officers. With an estimated 2,000 people participating, the march was one of the larger such events to be held in Ukraine in recent years, as LGBT campaigners have stepped up efforts to gain recognition, support, and protection. | PHOTO BY REUTERS

TOKYO

Pop-up Pride House opens for LGBT fans

As the Rugby World Cup got underway recently, a pop-up venue for LGBT and other sexual minority fans opened in Tokyo Organizers hope to build on for next year's Olympics and beyond, according to Olympic officials. The Pride House Tokyo 2019 in the capital's Harajuku district will be open through Nov. 4 to disseminate information about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and other sexual minorities and serve as a safe space for them during the roughly six-week-long tournament. After 2020, the consortium is planning to launch a permanent LGBT center as a legacy of the sporting events, focusing on offering support and consultation services, particularly to younger members of sexual minorities in Japan. | RUGBY WORLD CUP PHOTO

FRANCE

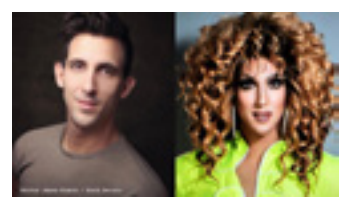
In vitro fertilization for lesbians approved

France is moving towards allowing lesbians and single women to conceive children with medical help, setting the stage for a clash with conservatives who say it would create generations of "fatherless" kids. For now, only heterosexual couples have the right to use medically-assisted reproduction methods such as in vitro fertilization, commonly known as IVF. Given the green light by the National Assembly, the bill must also get the go-ahead from the upper house, or Senate, before it can become law. The National Assembly passed the draft law by 55 votes to 17.

NATIONAL

NEW YORK

Meet the drag queen running for council



Marti Gould Cummings is trying not to swear but just can't help it. "When I win, it's going to be a really fucking awesome feeling," she tells Nico Lang for out.com. "I believe this is my calling. I believe this is what I am put on this earth to do — to not only be a drag queen who's funny, silly, and entertaining, but somebody who took that platform and used it for something bigger. I'm really nervous, scared, and excited and ready to do the work." Cummings is officially throwing their hat in the ring for the New York City Council, where they hope to represent Manhattan's District 7. Although the 51-person board currently boasts a plethora of LGBTQ+ representation, including Speaker Corey Johnson, many of those politicians are term-limited. Cummings, a longtime activist and performer in the city, said their candidacy is critical to ensure that LGBTQ+ keep their seat at the table.

COLORADO

OK to give gays and atheists the boot

A new poll by Public Religion Research Institute (PPRI) found that nearly a quarter of Americans say it's okay to not serve atheists on religious grounds. The pro-discrimination number was even higher regarding gays and lesbians. Bias against Jews, Muslims, and African Americans is also increasing. PPRI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and education organization that specializes in identifying trends in religious life and belief.

VIRGINIA

UVA grad Tina Fey says stop

The University of Virginia (UVA) put out a video featuring Tina Fey asking their students to not be so homophobic at football games. At issue is the school's fight song, "The Good Old Song," which was written in the late 1800's. The song has a line that goes: "We come from old Virginia where all is bright and gay." In the 1970's – just as the "homosexual" meaning of the word "gay" was becoming common knowledge for straight people – students substituted "not gay" for the word "gay" in the song. "That, obviously, is not only not politically incorrect, its heinous and pretty divisive," one student says in a video released by the university's administration. "I just had an amazing idea: stop doing that," says actress and screenwriter Tina Fey, who graduated from the University of Virginia in 1992 with a BA in drama. | UVA PHOTO

STATE

ALTOONA

No gay people here Mayor says

According to Altoona Pride Parade Support's Facebook event post, Altoona Mayor Matthew Pacifico "stated that no gay people live there. It sparked a huge response from their local LGBTQ+ family and our allies. Now, there's going to be a Pride Parade to coincide with National Coming Out Day. Carpooling will be available. To be a driver or to reserve a seat, contact Jay at 570-980-1040.

Altoona Mayor Matthew Pacifico

Related to the parade, Altoona area TV station WTAJ reported: A recent study found hate crimes against the LGBT community have increased more than a third in the past 20 years. According to the study from security.org, nearly 12 percent of all hate crimes target the LGBT community. The WTJA tory continued: Sue Patterson, Director of Student Diversity and Inclusion Programming at Penn State Altoona, said part of the problem is people being afraid of showing their true colors and getting judged because of it. "They want to be amazing members of the community, and they already are. It's just so often they're doing it quietly where people don't know because they're afraid of the retribution they might get if they come out," she said.

Looking to 2020 with hope and resilience

Publisher's Voice

By Frank Pizzoli

As we all look to 2020, let's remember that the queer community is a resilient group of people.

It's true that good doesn't win every battle. No matter how strong we are. But eventually goodness and truth win the war. Our challengers are legion but not guaranteed success. If we can remember not to fritter away precious energy with arguments over who has it worst, then we can link arms and proceed forward.

When we *Politically Correct* one another into a coma, the powers that be laugh so hard at us. That's exactly what they want. That's how power is kept. That's how we deny ourselves increased power.

PC-only is a one-size-fits-all easy solution that doesn't require one to think through history and nuance and arrive at the here-and-now. For example, rather than deny access or programming or resources to, let's say, someone or an organization or business who in its history has done something you think was wrong, ask yourself: Where are they today? Cognizant of past misdeeds? Are they willing to engage in a way that past misdeeds would have ruled out?

Another example. If the *We-Don't-Like-The-Gays-Biz* says to you *We-Get-It*. From now on we'll not automatically rule out hiring a queer. We will look for skills and/or the willingness to learn skills if past oppressions have left you out. If that happens, then celebrate with them. In others words, when you find injustice engage it. Don't close the door. How else can you grab a chance to sit down and simply talk? You may not change minds but not engaging won't either.

....when you find injustice engage it. Don't close the door.

What if the *We-Don't-Like-The-Gays-Biz* or entity or individual is resistant to acknowledging past misdeeds? If a religious zealot thinks you're damaged goods for being queer or that People of Color, or POC queers are not to be respected, then move on. Protest, or not. Empower yourself.

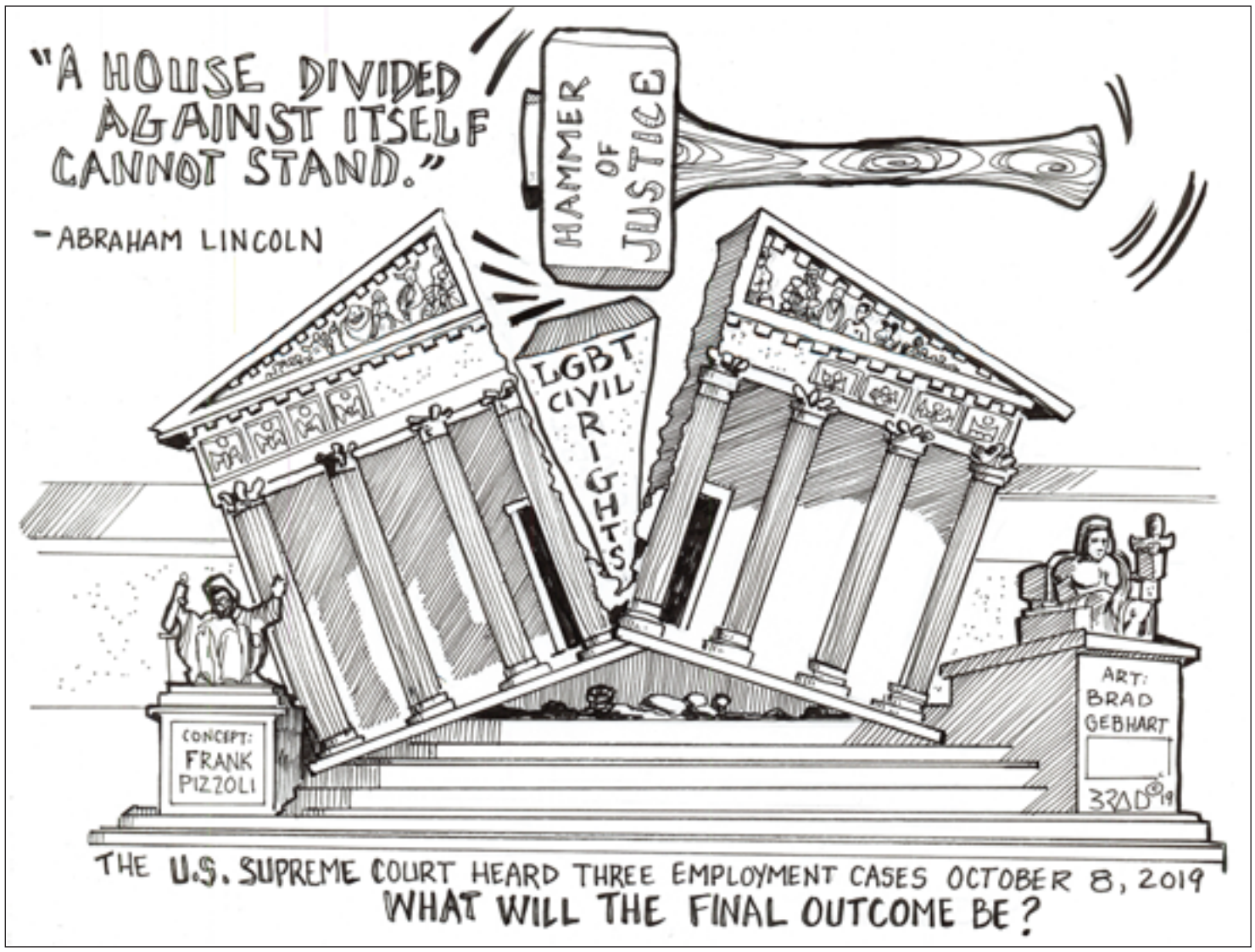
Same with *Did-It-Then-But-Not-Now Corp.* If the entity or organization or individual is cognizant of past misdeeds, acknowledge their evolution. Invite them in, not out. Engage them in continuing the struggle for social justice.

And the most important question is *What have I as an individual done in my past that was mean, excluded someone for being different than me?* If you haven't done something like that, hurry, call up The Vatican. They're looking for new saints.

If your standard is lifelong purity, no one will satisfy you. Not even you would satisfy you. Because we all know each and every one of us can look back and find where we have gone wrong. And we'd like a chance to let others know that. To be forgiven. And move on. To actually get something accomplished other than being told *You did bad once*!

If your standard is lifelong purity, there won't be anyone to link arms with as we work at the intersections of life to address social justice issues. That's my 2020 outlook. What's yours?

Email: frankpizzoli@gmail.com


"A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND."
-ABRAHAM LINCOLN
HAMMER OF JUSTICE
LGBT CIVIL RIGHTS
CONCEPT: FRANK PIZZOLI
ART: BRAD GEBHART
THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HEARD THREE EMPLOYMENT CASES OCTOBER 8, 2019
WHAT WILL THE FINAL OUTCOME BE?

the Central Voice

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JUDICIAL RETENTION: VOTERS ARE THE JURY

PA Bar Assoc. offers their ratings for judicial candidates

The Pennsylvania Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Commission (PBA JEC) has issued its ratings of two Superior Court of Pennsylvania judges and two Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania judges who are standing for retention in the November 5 general election.

The PBA JEC's ratings for the retention candidates are as follows:

Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania Judge P. Kevin Brobson – Recommended for Retention

Judge Patricia A. McCullough – Recommended for Retention

Superior Court of Pennsylvania Judge Anne E. Lazarus – Recommended for Retention

Judge Judith F. Olson – Recommended for Retention

Because retention elections require only a "yes" or "no" vote of the public, the commission rates retention candidates either as "recommended for retention" or "not recommended for retention."

The commission based its findings for each candidate on a two-part evaluation process. Investigative panels conducted the first phase of the process, which included a thorough review of the candidate's completed questionnaire, an analysis of written opinions authored by the retention candidate within the last three to five years, and interviews with judges and lawyers who have appeared before the retention candidate.

The panels then submitted confidential written reports to the commission outlining the results of their investigations.

As the second phase, the commission members reviewed the questionnaires and written opinions, as well as the investigative panel reports, and interviewed the panel chairs before rendering their own evaluation and recommendation.

The commission includes lawyer and non-lawyer members from across the state.

The PBA JEC's descriptions of its findings for each retention candidate are below. The candidates' questionnaires can be found in the Media Center of the PBA website at www.pabar.org and the PBA-sponsored voter education website, PA-VoteSmart, at www.pavotesmart.com.

COMMONWEALTH COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Judge P. Kevin Brobson

Rating: Recommended for Retention

The candidate has served on the Commonwealth Court since 2010. The candidate is recognized by members of the bar and bench as an excellent jurist who is even tempered, fair and knowledgeable. The candidate's judicial opinions are well written, thorough and precise. He is currently the board chair of the Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania. He exhibits his dedication to the profession through community service, including acting as the jurist-in-residence at Widener University Commonwealth Law School and providing pro bono legal service. The commission recommends the candidate's retention because of his consistent judicial excellence, even-keeled temperament, and commitment to the bar, bench and community at large.

Judge Patricia A. McCullough

Rating: Recommended for Retention

The candidate previously served on the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County and has served on the Commonwealth Court since 2010. Those who were interviewed concerning the candidate describe her as conscientious, hardworking, fair minded, open to new concepts and dedicated. The attorneys who come before her and her fellow judges consider her to be professional, well prepared and having a firm grasp of the facts and the law. The candidate was appointed to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Appellate Court Federal Rules Committee, which she currently chairs. She is active in the Pennsylvania and Allegheny County bar associations and is a course planner for continuing legal education courses. The candidate is also active in the community. She served on the United Way Strategic Planning Committee, the Pennsylvania Catholic Committee on Social Concerns and Immigrants Against Domestic Violence Task Force. The candidate's character and integrity make her well suited for her position on Commonwealth Court. For all the reasons stated above, the commission believes the candidate should continue service on the Commonwealth Court and accordingly recommends her retention.

SUPERIOR COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Judge Anne E. Lazarus

Rating: Recommended for Retention

The candidate has served as a Superior Court judge for the past 10 years. Her impressive career also includes service on the trial court for a combined total of nearly 29 years on the bench. She has earned the reputation as an extremely capable and hardworking jurist. Her judicial temperament has been described as "perfect," and her opinions are thoroughly researched and well written. The candidate was active in creating programs in the First Judicial District relating to educating the public as to custody procedures, which served as the template for the current statewide custody conciliation program. In addition to her work on the Superior Court, the candidate teaches courses to both law students and lawyers throughout the commonwealth. She has earned the respect of both litigants and lawyers during her time on the bench, and the commission recommends her retention for the Superior Court.

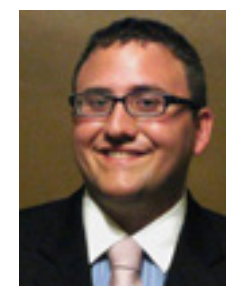
Judge Judith F. Olson

Rating: Recommended for Retention

Having served on Superior Court for the last 10 years, the candidate is regarded as a hardworking and extremely capable jurist. She has authored well-written opinions that are easily followed and understood, and which demonstrate appreciation of the effects legal decisions have on the lives of the parties involved. She is described as talented, bright, prepared and fair in her application of existing law to the cases before the court. The candidate has actively participated in community and charitable boards and is loyal to the missions and purposes of the institutions. She also speaks at bar association programs, giving practical advice to those in attendance. The candidate has earned high praise and respect for her service on the Superior Court and the commission recommends her retention.

Founded in 1895, the Pennsylvania Bar Association strives to promote justice, professional excellence and respect for the law; improve public understanding of the legal system; facilitate access of legal services; and serve the lawyer members of the state's largest organized bar association.

Alex Reber offers his opinion on judicial retention



Alex Reber is Treasurer of the Pennsylvania State Democratic Party and 1st Vice Chair of the Dauphin County Democratic Party. He tells The Central Voice: The only Judge I know personally on this list is Judge Anne Lazarus. She has been supported by Stonewall Democrats chapters and previously was rated "Highly Recommended" by the PA Bar. She has been responsible for enforcing equality under the law, particularly as it applies to LGBTQ issues such as adoptions and marriage. She believes every citizen is entitled to be treated equally and with dignity under the law and in my opinion, deserves retention."

Voice Box

Notes from our readers

E-mail your comments to frankpizzoli@gmail.com

GREAT NEWS

This is great! Pennsylvania Capital-Star does excellent reporting, and the greater LGBTQ+ community needs more info on what's going on under the dome. Thanks! *(Referring to recent announced content-sharing arrangement between The Central Voice and Pennsylvania Capital-Star.)*

Jason Landau Goodman, Executive Director, PA Youth Congress

YOU'RE WELCOME

Fantastic story! Thank you so much! *("Is Medicare for all a solution?" Sept-Oct 2019 issue and on web site)*

Noah Levinson, Executive Director of Healthcare4AllPA

WONDERFUL

The article is just wonderful. *("Lancaster LGBTQ+ Coalition is buzzing all over with Activity," Sept-Oct 2019 issue)* Thank you so much and thank you for your support!

Karen Foley, President, Lancaster LGBTQ+ Coalition

LOCAL MARCH

Thanks so much Frank – you're the best!!! *(Regarding local Transgender Day of Visibility March promotion and coverage)*

Rev. Lori Hatch-Rivera, MCC

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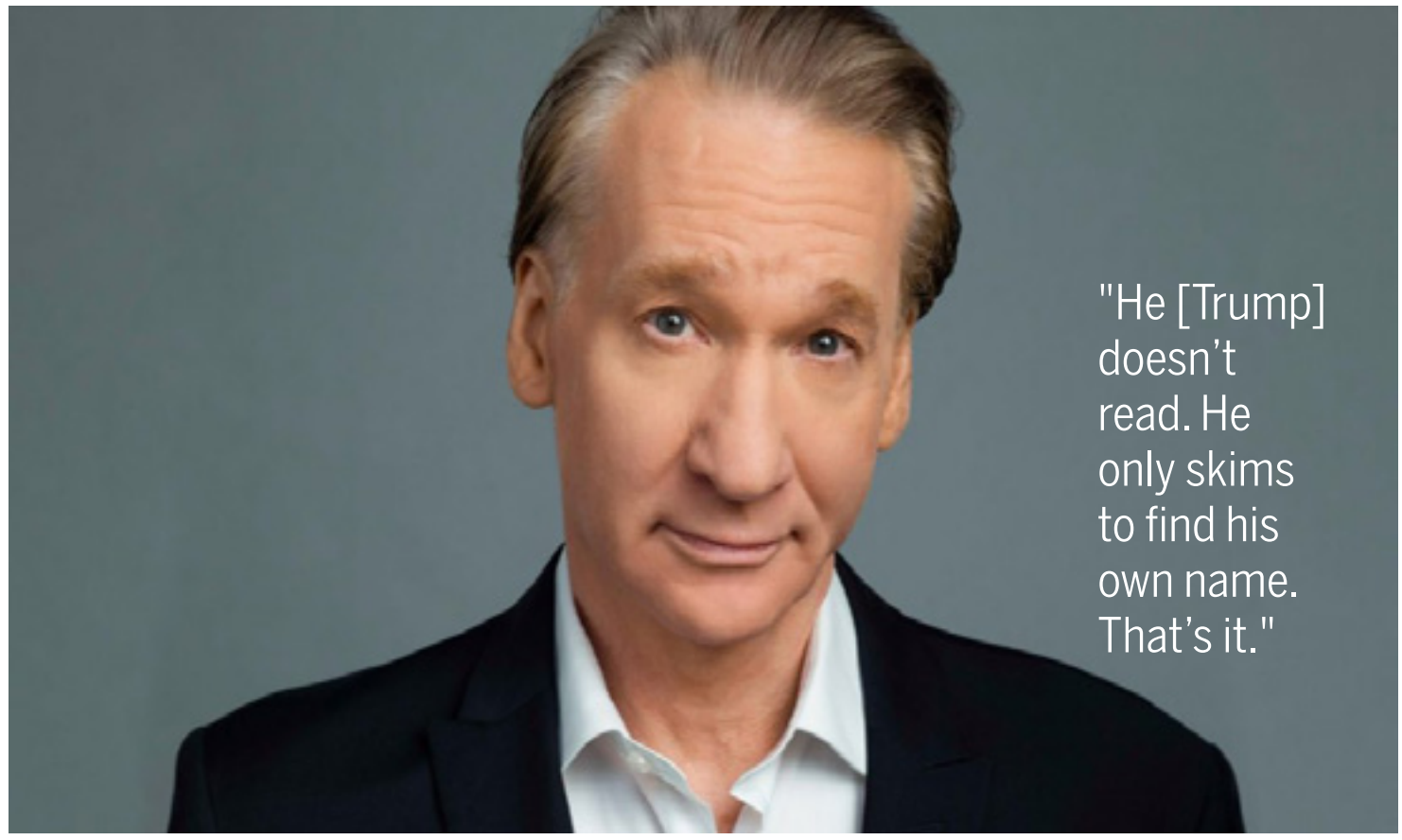
REAL GAY NEWS. WE GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT.

APPEARS IN PA, IMPORTANT 2020 STATE

Bill Maher likes newspapers, says we need to laugh in spite of Trump

By Frank Pizzoli



Bill Maher's political talk show, *Real Time with Bill Maher* has been an HBO hit since 2003. With more than 500 episodes under his comedy belt and averaging 4 million viewers a show, Maher talked by telephone with *The Central Voice* on the same day (Oct. 8) the US Supreme Court heard three LGBT civil rights cases. He also addressed Pennsylvania politics and the 2020 presidential election.

Frank Pizzoli: Pennsylvania is an important state in the 2020 presidential election. You've asked Trump supporters why they like him. What do they say?

Bill Maher: Pennsylvania may be the most important state in 2020. It's interesting to me - who used to do a show called Politically Incorrect - that Trump supporters tell me across-the-board they do not like our culture's emphasis on being politically correct. That always swims to the top.

FP: Your reaction to that feedback?

BM: That speaks volumes about where we are in our political culture. Consistently Trump supporters tell me they're tired of having to watch every P and Q in everything they say. I understand and get some of that. Trump may be a bore but he's speaking to people who like hearing what he has to say. On the other hand, he's not boring to the Ultra Woke on Twitter. That's where we seem to be on all this.

FP: Is Trump accidentally right about ending 'endless' wars? Are we abandoning our allies?

BM: I made that same point when Trump first ran. Look, it's not easy to be an Empire. And when it's over, or you want it to be over, there's a right way and a wrong way to end dominance. It's always been easy to go in and difficult to get out.

I think people are generally war-weary. I think it's also part of Trump's wanting to undo everything Obama and other presidents put in place before him. But we have to remember that this is a president who has no curiosity. He's a malignant narcissist who functions only in the here and now. He cannot think ahead. He doesn't read. He only skims to find his own name. That's it.

FP: If Trump is impeached or not re-elected, he's said the US will see violence, maybe even a civil war.

BM: We've already had two people who've made bomb threats. Cesar Sayoc, a Florida bodybuilder and nightclub bouncer. He mailed inoperative pipe bombs to prominent Democrats and media figures he thought were critical of Trump. (Since sentenced to 20 years in prison.)

About six months ago Coast Guard lieutenant Christopher Paul Hasson was charged with stockpiling weapons. (Court documents described Hasson as a "domestic terrorist" who was planning "to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country…". Federal prosecutors said at the time he was cultivating plans to launch a widespread attack on prominent Democratic lawmakers, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and several high-profile television anchors from MSNBC and CNN.)

Both of these guys planned to go out and bomb because they were not happy with things. Borderline personalities respond this way.

FP: How are newspapers, media outlets supposed to 'report' and keep their audiences informed?

BM: I like newspapers! I'm old-fashioned in that way. Thank God for newspapers. I say that because newspapers have reporters who have to go to Syria and cover a war, first hand. They go to the White House. They find out what's going on. And let's be honest. Most of what appears online actually starts out in a newspaper. Online picks it up. But they pick up stories that are crafted in the old-fashioned way. By asking questions, finding things out and reporting back.

FP: What about the smoke-and-mirrors of misinformation? The Fake News phenomena?

BM: What scares me is our quasi-fascist regime. The kind of leaders who want to destroy our confidence in the public media. It's incredible that 25% of Republicans do not believe that Joe Biden was mentioned in the Ukrainian telephone conversation. Even though the White House has confirmed that he was. That's scary to me.

FP: Scary to many of our readers is that today (day of actual phone interview) the US Supreme Court will hear three LGBT civil rights cases. Why do you think the country, especially Conservative Christians, and the US Congress, just can't let this happen? Pennsylvania, by the way, has no LGBT protections.

BM: Conservative Christians, they act as if they're being victimized–Their right to take away your right. I truly believe this will work itself out in the right direction. We should not stop but we should also recognize just how far things have come in recent years. We need to recognize that the piano has been moved. Now we're just moving the stool.

FP: People are well aware of your comedy and criticism of organized religion. Do you have a place inside that's your 'spiritual' go to?

BM: I don't even know what that means. I'm not sure what the definition of spirituality is. I mean out here in California it means I'm a nice person, I do yoga, and I'm okay - you're okay. Everybody has their own definition of what spirituality means. I don't know what it means. I mean, think about it. Science tells us that 14 billion years ago the Big Bang was an explosion from something the size of a marble. How am I supposed to understand that? If Stephen Hawkins couldn't, I can't.

FP: You just let it go?

BM: I don't bother myself with that stuff. I'm 63 years old. I just want to be healthy. I want to know my prostate is in good health.

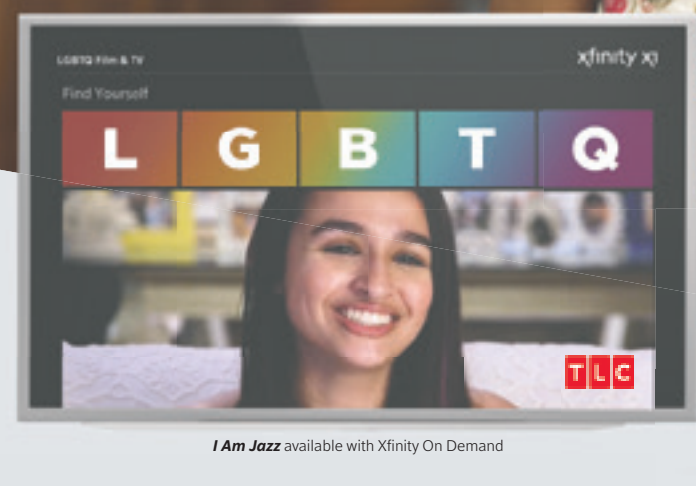
FP: I'm 68. Life's tough enough.

BM: Then you get it!

FP: What about your audience here in the Harrisburg region?

BM: We are big, broad country. I think it's a good idea for me to spend time talking about Trump. But then I talk about other things. I feel a bond with my audiences. I know, first of all, we have to pay attention to Trump and our current politics. But we can't live on that edge. Sure, we have to vent but we also have to laugh. That's what I hope to accomplish when I'm in the greater Harrisburg area.

Comedian Bill Maher appears Nov. 10 at Hershey Theatre



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Art Association of HARRISBURG

Upcoming Events

Through November 21st:
"Hope, Memory & Pride: Artists View Equality" & "Bits & Pieces of the Past"

November 9th, 6:00-8:30 pm:
Psychic Gallery with William Stillman
- Tickets: $25 advance

November 10th, 2:30-4:30 pm:
Painting Demonstration by Katriel Srebnik
- Donations: $10 @ the door

November 17th, 2-4 pm:
"Every Possible Sound" Concert
- Feat. Jonathan Diggs Duke & Jamal R. Moore
- Donations: $10 @ the door

December 6th, 5-8 pm:
"Texture, Fiber & Form"
- Feat. works by Paula Lehman, Liz Hamilton Quay & Stephanie Wallendjack
- Music by Jonathan Frazier

December 7th, 6-9 pm:
"Reveillion" Holiday Soirée
- Hosted by Tracey Meloni
- Tickets: $75 advance, limited to 25 attendees

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Arts & Entertainment

Brazilian mayor tries to ban Marvel's Avengers over gay kiss

By Nicholas Duncan

Brazil and the United States are diverse countries. Each has their own culture, but are more alike than one may realize.

Same-Sex marriage in the US expanded from one state in 2004 to all 50 states in 2015. Brazil legalized same-sex marriages in 2013. Yes, this is an enormous accomplishment; however, there are still too many people, especially in US, in positions of political office and business who make decisions for "We the People".

In making those decisions affecting us, many find it difficult to separate their personal beliefs from their public duties – which means that they need to respect differences. Our differences. (Like a cartoon in this publication once noted: If you think homosexuality is wrong, then don't be a homo. Doesn't sound like a good idea for you. But you don't get to make that decision for anyone else.)

MARVEL'S AVENGERS: THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

We often observe that the actions of President Trump, Vice President Pence, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and business leaders encourage discrimination based on their "chosen" religious beliefs. A similar situation has recently occurred in Brazil where a Marvel's *Avengers* storyline has sparked a major censorship controversy in Rio De Janeiro.

According to reports from Brazilian media, Rio's Mayor Marcelo Crivella tried to take on it upon himself to remove the sale of *Avengers: The Children's Crusade* graphic novel from the 19th International Book Biennial. The event took place in his city.

Crivella reportedly cited *The Children's Crusade* for having "sexual content for minors" in the form of a scene where two male characters (Wiccan and Hulkling) kiss. That kiss scene prompted Crivella to order booksellers to pull all copies of publication. He thought he was protecting Rio's youth.

Booksellers reportedly refused to acquiesce – and, in fact, copies of *The Children's Crusade* began selling out of stock. The book-buying public's rebuke of the mayor's order subsequently pushed Crivella to a more drastic step. He sent law enforcement officials into the event to either forcibly censor or confiscate material deemed "inappropriate" or "pornographic."

As a countermeasure to the mayor's aggressive pursuit of censorship, the book festival filed, "a request for a preventive injunction with the Rio de Janeiro Court of Justice to ensure the full functioning of the event and the right of exhibitors to commercialize literary works on the most diverse subjects - as foreseen by the Brazilian legislation."

A statement was issued by SEOP's chief, Wolney Dias, who seems to back Mayor Crivella's stance by splitting hairs over the semantics of censorship: "City hall has police power for that. If the material is not following the recommendations, it will be collected. We are following the guidance of the city prosecutor's office. I do not understand that there is censorship. If it is pornographic material, offered without the standards, it will be collected."

The outcome: According to *Out Magazine;* The Supreme Court of Brazil has issued a strong rebuke to Rio de Janeiro Mayor Marcelo Crivella's attempts to remove *Avengers: The Children's Crusade* from the event over a gay kiss. The court ruled that officials cannot target LGBT publications for censorship.

According to the court, Crivella's actions violated the constitution's guarantee of equal protection for all; "something USA has not accomplished yet," and the court issued an injunction against attempts to confiscate the comic.

The irony: The mayor's attempt to ban *The Children's Crusade* has backfired in every possible way. Increased interest in the volume led to all copies selling out before the event even began. Ironically, the comic is a story nearly a decade old.

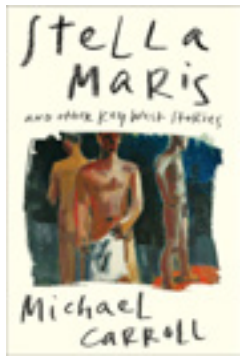
It helped establish the Young Avengers as a team geared toward the Millennial generation, and "wasn't afraid" to tackle subjects its predecessors rarely touched upon, like sexuality.

The result: More than ever before, comic books tackle many issues that lead to human ignorance and different types of discrimination. They show the reader how to overcome these negative social behaviors and learn how to be a better human by embracing the unfamiliar.

Meanwhile, in the US Republican lawmakers in North Carolina are trying to ban marriage equality reports Alex Bollinger for LGBTQ Nation. One of them got so upset at a constituent complaint that he told the constituent to "tell it to Satan." State assembly Republicans are trying to pass HB 65, also known as the Marriage Reaffirmation Amendment Act. The bill would ban marriage equality in the state and tell state officials to ignore the Supreme Court's Obergefell decision. See what I mean by elected officials trying to make decisions for "We the People"?

Michael Carroll's stories vicious, slippery, and fun

By Frank Pizzoli



Cuban fisherman relied on the Key West lighthouse called Stella Maris, Star of the Sea, as their beacon. Now short story enthusiasts can rely on Michael Carroll's *Stella Maris And Other Key West Stories* as their guide to good reading.

Padgett Powell says of Carroll's world drawn from his many visits to the most southern point in the US: "Mr. Carroll's world is a little vicious, slippery in its sexuality…strangely reminiscent of the hootier, hard-candy end of the Tennessee Williams spectrum. It is flat-out odd, fun, and seeming true."

A Sue Kaufman Prize-winning author, Carroll's end-of-the-line bohemian oasis brings into its pages people from everywhere. Readers are treated to the never-ending parade of condo share tower inhabitants, chain stores, and Redneck Riviera clientele. Key West is a mecca for gay men and the women who love them. His stories wind in and out of the bars and guesthouses and lives of this singular paradise: a memorial for a drag queen held at the vicar's Victorian leads to uneasy encounters; two southern sisters on a cruise ship holiday are up against the ravages of alcohol, estrangement, and deadly weather. Newly divorced gay men (already a phenomenon) lick their wounds and bask in the island's lasting social twilight. At the all-male, clothing-optional resort, guys of all ages fall into one another's paths, enjoy themselves as they please, and surprise one another on their views and preconceptions.

Stella Maris is about the verities of illness and death. The past and its prisoners, AIDS, the young and not so young man's realization of his own mortality. It's about the unpredictable nature of life, and of survival. It's about new beginnings and final recognitions. John Freeman, Literary Hub, calls Carroll "One of the best social observers in American fiction."

Author, Michael Carroll
| PHOTO JEFF BOND

The Central Voice: Why set the stories in Key West? A favorite place for you?

Michael Carroll: The long answer is that it hasn't appeared much in recent fiction, but of course there's a long history going back past Ernest Hemingway. Key West needs more coverage to track the changes it's gone through, and pinpoint what, if anything, has endured. Another gay novel, Silas House's *Southernmost*, appeared last year. But other than that, I don't know of much gay coverage of Key West.

The short answer is that it's a place I love, and I go there every year for a month with my husband. This is an incredible privilege, but I don't think I've squandered it. I feel I've soaked up a lot of the place, and that it's unique.

CV: What's Key West like now?

MC: It's a southern town with bohemian values. There are more tourists than ever, but I know how to avoid them if I'm not in the mood for crowds. I spend a lot of time at the Island House. People come from all over the world and say the resort is unique. It's enclosed and complete. Some guys stay there by the pool and at the bar for days at a time. It has a great restaurant. You don't have to leave if you don't want to. Since I've never hooked up on the apps, and am currently not dating anyone, I go there for my annual sex. You can do it in dozens of different places within the confines, and do it the way I like best: not on the phone but by first meeting and talking to people. No time-wasting chat. Or you can get into an orgy in somebody's room.

CV: What does the setting allow your characters to do? What does it reveal about them?

MC: You can drink your brains out in the street. You can fuck in public, in the backs of bars, etc. In other words, in that setting a writer can reveal a person's true identity and character. And you can bring him in contact with all kinds of other people from around the world. The one thing that persists is that you have to be somewhat open-minded to go to Key West and tolerate its debauchery. You don't move there and expect to have quiet neighbors. You wouldn't call the police on a party.

CV: You're from Florida. Key West is our southern-most point. Are aspects of your stories reflective of your experiences?

MC: I got fascinated by Southern literature young. Truman Capote was my

Please see **MICHAEL CARROLL**, page **20**

THE PULLO CENTER

The Ten Tenors
Home for the Holidays
December 8, 2019, at 7:30 p.m.

Dinosaur World Live
February 1, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

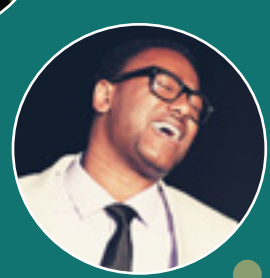
The Music of Sam Cooke
Starring Bradd Marquis
February 8, 2020, at 7:30 p.m.

That Golden Girls Show
A Puppet Parody
February 16, 2020, at 7:30 p.m.

The Greatest Love of All
A Tribute to Whitney Houston
Starring Belinda Davids
March 7, 2020, at 7:30 p.m.

Andrew McCarthy Live with
A Screening of *Weekend at Bernie's*
April 2, 2020, at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets make great gifts!



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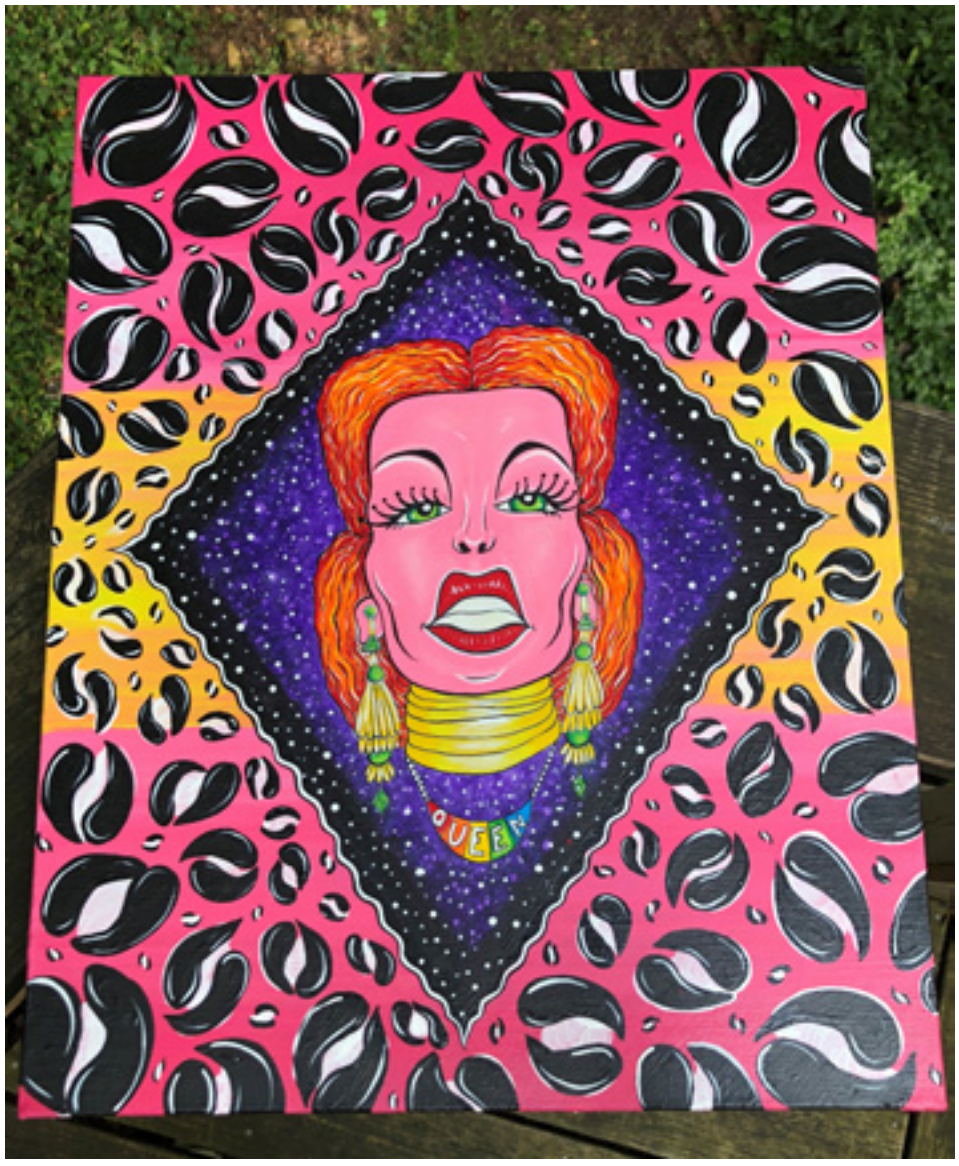


SPECIAL LGBT EXHIBIT OCT 18 – NOV 21

Hope, Memory & Pride: Artists View Equality

Running Oct. 18 through Nov. 21, Hope, Memory & Pride: Artists View Equality, A Compilation of Various Artists Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, the Art Association of Harrisburg joins the worldwide recognition of the seminal queer civil rights moment.

Also running simultaneously with the LGBT exhibit is Bits & Pieces of the Past, a Commentary on the Opioid Crisis by Mario Manios and Brush with the Law.

Longtime friend and ally of the region's LGBT community AAH executive director Carrie Wissler Thomas says," We are honored to be part of the series of exhibitions being presented throughout the region in commemoration of the Stonewall Riots."

"The Art Association is an open and welcoming organization and we encourage those of all ethnicities, income levels, and gender identities to visit, participate in our exhibitions, and attend our visual art classes," Wissler says. This will be an exciting collection of varied works "coordinated by our talented young Curator Rachel O'Connor, and I urge everyone to attend to experience the exhibition," Wissler says.

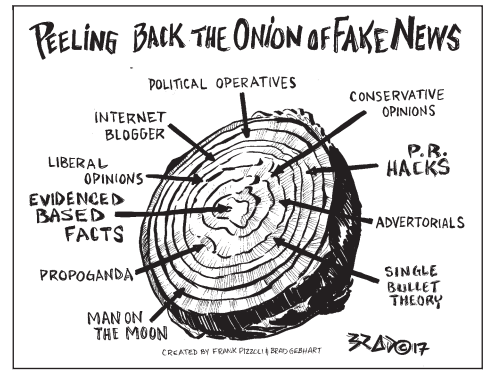
The opening reception is Oct. 18, 5-8p.m.

REAL GAY NEWS. WE GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT.
TheCentralVoice.com

The Central Voice cartoon art on display at Lancaster Museum of Art

The Central Voice Cartoon Art will be on display at Lancaster Museum of Art Nov. 1 – 17. There will be an opening during Lancaster's First Friday on Friday, Nov 1 from 5 – 8pm.

The original art installation was on display at Susquehanna Art Museum as part of a curated exhibit organized by the LGBT Center of Central PA. The installation is comprised of cartoons published in *The Central Voice* which are a collaboration between artist and illustrator Brad Gebhart and founding publisher and editor Frank Pizzoli. "How else could I have this much fun? It's been a wonderful collaboration," Pizzoli says.



The collaborative works of cartoonist Brad Gebhart and The Central Voice publisher and editor Frank Pizzoli will be on display Nov. 1-17.

Open Stage opens 34th season with Pulitzer-winning theatre

In its 34th season, Open Stage of Harrisburg presents Angels in America May 9 – June 28. Read an oral history by the artists who created the seminal and celebrated theatre piece.

The World Only Spins Forward: The Ascent of Angels in America, by Isaac Butler and Dan Kois

"The oral history of Angels in America, as told by the artists who created it and the audiences forever changed by it--a moving account of the AIDS era, essential queer history, and an exuberant backstage tale. When Tony Kushner's Angels in America hit Broadway in 1993, it won the Pulitzer Prize, swept the Tonys, launched a score of major careers, and changed the way gay lives were represented in popular culture. Mike Nichols›s 2003 HBO adaptation starring Meryl Streep, Al Pacino, and Mary-Louise Parker was itself a tour de force, winning Golden Globes and eleven Emmys, and introducing the play to an even wider public. This generation-defining classic continues to shock, move, and inspire viewers worldwide. Now, on the 25th anniversary of that Broadway premiere, Isaac Butler and Dan Kois offer the definitive account of Angels in America in the most fitting way possible: through oral history. (From the book's jacket)

FAB 2019 awardees honored at gala

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall, the LGBT Center of Central PA hosted FAB 2019 Sept. 21, at the Hershey Lodge. The event focused on Celebrating a Legacy of Resistance and Resilience.

The annual event was "an inspiring evening to celebrate this milestone year in our LGBTQ+ movement, reflect on the groundbreaking work of Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and other Stonewall activists who led the resistance, and honor those who are carrying on this vital work today," according to a center email.

Annually, the center presents awards. This year's recipients were:

Movement Leadership Award:
CIORA THOMAS

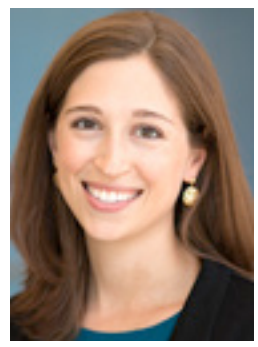
The Movement Leadership Award recognizes an individual, group, or organization whose work at the statewide or national level is advancing LGBTQ+ equity and inclusion within our movement, and provides a model for us to strive towards in our work in central Pennsylvania.

Ciora Thomas is a Pittsburgh native and founder and President of SisTers PGH, developed in 2013, advocating for transgender rights within the social and economic realms in order to continue the demarginalization and equality of the trans communities of Pittsburgh. SisTers PGH has since then opened a drop-in space for Trans and nonbinary people where they are able to obtain resources and temporary housing through the organization, with a plan to gain employment in order to transition into permanent affordable housing.

Ciora is one of only a few transwomen of color leaders in Pittsburgh, speaking truth to power about women's rights, systematic transphobia, racism, oppression, affordable housing, and everything encompassing trans inclusion with a black trans intersectional and unapologetic approach in order to bring the very lived experiences of trans people to the front lines as leaders. Knowing the struggles that inherit our nation at large, she strives to make a difference in forwarding the reassurance of equality everywhere while being a strong advocate and movement of action for the transgender population of Pittsburgh. In the struggles that many of the LGBTQIA+ communities face, she has lived through it and has gained great knowledge on how to lead and bring success in bettering the lives of those who struggle to survive in communities not built for their independence or growth.

Local Spotlight Award:
DR. KATHARINE DALKE

The Local Spotlight Award recognizes an individual, group, or organization whose work is significantly contributing to building connected, engaged, and resilient LGBTQ+ communities in the region.



Katharine B. Dalke, MD, is a psychiatrist at the Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute, and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Director for Culturally Responsive Health Care Education at the Penn State College of Medicine. Her clinical practice focuses on the psychiatric care and support of LGBTQ+ and intersex adolescents and adults, and she is helping to establish an integrated clinic for transgender youth at Hershey Children's. Dr. Dalke is also responsible for developing curricula to train medical learners to provide culturally competent care for patients from diverse backgrounds.

After growing up in Pittsburgh, Dr. Dalke graduated from Haverford College, and then the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, where she also earned a Masters in Bioethics. She trained in Psychiatry at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, with clinical training in transgender health at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She held a faculty appointment and served as the Director for Sex and Gender Curriculum at Penn before joining the faculty at Penn State.

A longtime advocate for people with intersex traits, she has taught locally and nationally on intersex physical and mental health, and has published articles on medical care for people with intersex traits. Dr. Dalke is a proud member of the Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs and the Transgender Health Working Group at the Department of Health. She lives in Camp Hill with her spouse and children.

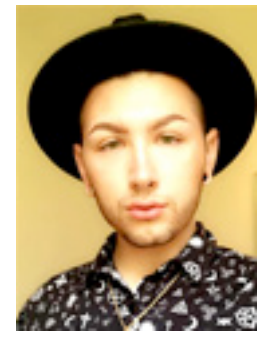
Volunteer of the Year Award:
ELY TAYLOR & KAY LAFAILLE

Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes an individual, group, or organization who has dedicated a significant amount of their personal time and energy as a volunteer to further the work of the LGBT Center of Central PA. This year, the LGBT Center presented a joint Volunteer of the Year Award to two outstanding individuals who do a lot of their volunteer work together - Ely Taylor and Kay Lafaille.

Ely Taylor is a black agender femme artist from Harrisburg. They believe in education through visibility and in utilizing their privilege as an openly transgender person to raise awareness on trans issues.

Ely is passionate about community building and mental health. They are a Transgender Training Institute Certified trainer and since 2018, have served as a facilitator leading the trans and nonbinary support group, Passageways, at the LGBT Center.

Driven by the belief that art can create positive and long-lasting change, Ely is a volunteer Co-Director of the LGBT Center of Central PA's ARTS of PA program. Their photo series "Transcending Visibility" has been displayed at the Center for the past two years, they've lead queer zine-making workshops, and also performed regularly at local drag shows as a way to bring joy and celebration to our community.



Kay Lafaille is a queer and trans/non-binary drag performer who uses the stage name "Luna Rubbish". They were born and raised in York, PA, and recently moved to Harrisburg, PA to focus on advocacy work. Kay is a facilitator of the Passageways trans and non-binary support group at the LGBT Center of Central PA. They are also a volunteer Co-Founder and Co-Director of the LGBT Center's ARTS of PA program in collaboration with their colleagues, Dre Ceja and Ely Taylor.

Kay is inspired by other non-binary drag performers as well as other powerful trans folks in their community. They use their drag shows as a way to fundraise for ARTS of PA. All fundraising profits go towards resources for trans/non-binary folks who also reside in Pennsylvania.

Rising Star Award:
GLO YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

The Rising Star Award recognizes an individual or group who has recently emerged as a leader, and has begun to make their mark within our local LGBTQ+ communities in the region through significant contributions in a short period of time.

The GLO (Project Silk) Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is comprised of young and dynamic queer men of color and trans women of color from the Harrisburg area ranging in age from 14 to 29. These youth and young adult leaders represent communities that battle not only significant stigma surrounding gender, sexuality, and the expression thereof, but also the social and economic stressors that too often characterize the lives of black and brown people.

Since the spring of this year, YAB members have been meeting monthly, giving thoughtful consideration to the ideal location, hours of operation, methods of engagement, and the types of programming that would best benefit their peers. They are pioneers in the City of Harrisburg, advising partner organizations on how best to serve their communities and proudly working to establish a safe, affirming space for queer LGBTQ+ youth of color. The current YAB includes Isaiah Morris, Yonna Hicks, and six other young people, and is growing every month.

Legacy Award:
SHAASHAWN DIAL

The Legacy Award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and personal dedication over a significant period of time in furthering the work of LGBTQ+ communities in Central PA.

Shaashawn Dial "The Voyce" is an award-winning radio broadcaster, published passionate poet, multi-sensory workshop facilitator, edutaining mistress of ceremonies, polished plenary moderator, seasoned event planner and advocate for and within LGBTQQIAAAP-PDS-2+ communities.

Shaashawn is the Founder of Voycetress Media, LLC which provides consulting services via public speaking, professional development, and voice over services. Voycetress Media, LLC puts your voice in the foreground by: (1) creating spaces welcoming to multiple identities instead of a primary hierarchic identity, and (2) promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion while advocating for the closing of disparity gaps. Voycetress Media, LLC is a LGBT Business Enterprise (LGBTBE) certified business by the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

Shaashawn completed six years of service on the Board of Directors for the

Please see **FAB AWARDS**, page **21**

IS CURE COMING?

Taking charge of your HIV

By Frank Pizzoli

HIV is treatable - if you take the pills. Taking charge of your virus is the key.

"Life with HIV is better if you treat your virus," says Patricia Fonzi, CEO, Family Health Council of Central Pennsylvania.

And it gets better.

Combinations of current medicines can lower the virus in your bloodstream to an "undetectable" level. That means the virus as measured on a routine blood test does not register high enough to be "detected" in your bloodstream. (It's still in your body though and we'll get to that exciting development below.)

And, if your virus is undetectable, you cannot transmit it to a sexual partner. That's really how it works. But you must be in treatment, take the medicines as prescribed, and maintain undectible levels of the virus for at least six months.

In fact, according to the National Institutes of Health the "clinical evidence has firmly established the HIV Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) concept as scientifically sound…" The Centers for Disease Control agrees that an HIV-positive person with an undetectable virus cannot pass the virus through unprotected sex. If you can't detect it, you can't transmit it.

Moving into action, FHCCP recently launched their Take Charge HIV Program. Enter Shannon McElroy, program coordinator. Pennsylvania has the 9th highest HIV diagnoses in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

"There's more to people than their HIV," says McElroy. She has a deep history with HIV in the region. McElroy volunteered for the six local Black & White Party benefits held in York and Harrisburg. The venue raised more than $100,000 for HIV efforts within the region. (The Central Voice was a benefit sponsor.)

"We encourage people, as our campaign says 'Take on life and take control of your HIV,'" McElroy points out. The point of the campaign is to enroll people in treatment. "With regular HIV treatments, you're able to stop the spread of HIV and live your life to the fullest," McElroy says.

If you're uninsured or underinsured, you might be eligible to receive free help right here in central Pennsylvania from leading medical providers, McElroy says. Access to care is a feature of the new program.

Why is access to care important? A cure for HIV may be on the way.

Researchers last July reported in Nature Communications, a peer-reviewed scientific journal covering natural sciences, including physics, chemistry, earth sciences, and biology, a potential way to eliminate HIV from an infected animal's genome. A genome is genetic material present in a living cell or organism like an animal or a human.

Scientists used a modified form of current HIV treatment on 29 mice. That treatment is known as Anti-retroviral Treatment or ART. It's a combination of medicines, when effective, that reduce the replicating virus to undetectable levels in the blood stream. To this known, effective treatment researchers added a sophisticated gene-editing technique that snips out HIV genes from infected cells. In various tests, the scientists could find no trace of the virus in 30% of the mice undergoing this double-punch treatment approach.

Why use this combination of interventions, both traditional HIV medicines and a gene-editing technique?

HIV can be effectively controlled in a person's circulating blood. Unfortunately, the deadly virus remains in what are called "reservoirs," or places like internal organs where the virus is not touched by the medicines cleansing it from circulating blood. And every so often, for reasons only partially understood, these reservoirs will spill more virus into the blood stream where the HIV is controlled by the oral medicines.

"This is extremely good news," John Goldman, MD, Infectious Disease and Internal Medicine affiliated with UPMC Pinnacle Health Infections Disease Associates.

Goldman cautions that this hopeful study is only partially successful with the mice and is an animal study. "The clinical results point toward a way forward," Goldman explains. The next step "is to improve the results with mice, then move to, for example, a non-human primate, and then move to human applications."

"This could represent a way toward a cure for HIV," Goldman says enthusiastically.

All the more reason to take charge of your HIV and be here when the cure is announced.

INFO - www.fhccp.org/take-control-hiv

Lancaster LGBTQ+ Coalition takes next steps

By Frank Pizzoli

"It is profound to witness the outpouring of excitement for our opening," Karen Foley, president, The Lancaster LGBTQ+ Coalition, tells *The Central Voice*.

Nov. 12, 5-7 p.m., the coalition will have its Launch Party at Tellus360.

"This will be our Queer We Are! event to publicly introduce the coalition," Foley explains.

Music by DJ Salinger, catering by Cracked Pepper Catering, photography by Michelle Johnson and Sirena Hildebrandt designing a super gay photo booth.

Nov. 19, 5-7 p.m., the coalition will host a Keystone Business Alliance Mixer at their headquarters at 342 N. Queen, Rear, Lancaster.

"As the voice of LGBTQ+ business in central Pennsylvania, we at Keystone Business Alliance are so excited to partner with the coalition, and thrilled by the work they're doing to advance LGBTQ+ equality in Lancaster," says Harry Young, Alliance executive director.

"Their work highlights our region's vibrant and diverse communities, and their dynamic leadership and vision is a testament to what we can achieve collaboratively," Young says.

Nov. 20, noon, the coalition is holding a Transgender Day of Remembrance flag-raising ceremony at Lancaster City Hall. Jessi Purdy, lead organizer for Lancaster's July Pride event, and The Coalition designer, Ellie Cochran, will speak.

Purdy says, "From the very beginning, the founding members of the coalition sought to create an organization that intentionally makes space for, serves, and uplifts the voices of Lancaster's transgender community."

Inclusion is important to Purdy.

"To be part of this amazing organization as we remember the lives of my transgender siblings lost to violence and hate fills me with a profound sense of pride and hope," she says.

Purdy, also a Diversity Trainer and HR Consultant, adds, "Our presence at Lancaster City Hall on Transgender Day of Remembrance, as we mourn and honor our lost, shows our community that Lancaster City is committed to our right to life, dignity and security."

Anyone looking to jump into the action?

Volunteers can help the coalition raise funds during the The Extraordinary Give, a nonprofit fundraising event held annually. This year's event is Nov. 22. The coalition will host a party 5 p.m. to midnight at Springhouse Taproom and a phone banking pizza party at coalition headquarters, 342 N. Queen St, Rear, Lancaster.

Jumping right into the greater Lancaster area, the new organization is providing Cultural Competency trainings for Lancaster General Hospital, the Lancaster Health Center, and the United Way.

"We're grateful for all of the support," Foley said, "and we look forward to connecting and strengthening our community."

LBBTQ+ Coalition leadership:

The coalition will be governed by Karen Foley, president; Lancaster Councilperson Ismail Wade Smith-El, vice president of public relations; Xavier Garcia-Molina, vice president of community engagement; Sherri Castillo, vice president of education advancement; Cameron Childers, treasurer; and Sarah Roberts, secretary; Jessi Purdy, human relations; Ellie Cochran, design and Lee Cohen as Coordinator.

Also joining the board are Todd Snovel, Diane Topakian, and Liz Fulmer, Peter Fair, Dena Stanley, Alexis Lake, Dr. Adam Lake and Lisa DiBernardo.

INFO - There are plenty of ways to volunteer time at the coalition - lgbt-lancaster.org

Front row L to R: Ellie Cochran, Lee Cohen. Back row L to R: Ismail Wade Smith-El, Steven Elckert, Karen Foley, Xavier Garcia-Molina, and Jared Shuey representing The LGBTQ+ Coalition.

From left: Karen Foley, Todd Snovel, and Lee Cohen.

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Creating a better future

Making Sense of Life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Is it time to take charge of your life in a new and more dynamic way? Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Then today is the day to start preparing to change and have the life you desire.

Does preparing for the future seem meaningless to you? Given the state of world conditions – politically, socially, and environmentally – preparations for a future that may look bleak or non-existent can seem to be a worthless effort on our part.

Here's why that isn't so: We live in the present. Preparations for the future can make a positive impact on our happiness now.

Is there anything you or I can do to change the past? Everyone has at least one thing they wish they could change. Haven't you ever royally screwed up, perhaps in public, and wished it never happened? We can't go back in time and negate our actions, or change the perceptions of others about our foibles.

At the same time, can we guarantee our future? Many of us thought we could, which is why we chose careers with large companies, seemingly unshakeable ones, who promised us a comfortable pension. Today many of us are facing a retirement income much different than what we expected.

Where does that leave us? The present. Today. Right now.

How are you feeling at this moment? Are you having a good time? Are you where you want to be in life? Or, put in other ways, do you have the relationship you desire? Are you happy in your job or career? Is your health such that you are able to enjoy life to the fullest?

It may seem that thinking about changing our current circumstances may be too monumental to tackle, particularly since we have few guarantees in life. There is, of course, the religious beliefs about a "greater later" if we do this or that (or rather DON'T do this or that!), but whether or not heaven or some reward exists is yet to be seen. That is why we must learn to enjoy the present. So why plan for the future? Why prepare for tomorrow or years to come?

Because what we are thinking right now affects our future. Our thoughts affect what happens tomorrow and, if those thoughts are consistent, can affect us for years to come. Does this mean we immediately manifest all our desires, or that we should blame ourselves for where we are today? No … and no.

Preparations for later today, what we hope to do tomorrow, or what we plan for our future keeps us focused on what we want. This is important for our happiness because studies have proven that we have a better chance of getting what we want in life by focusing on our desires and not on all the obstacles we may imagine.

You and I can remember, perhaps with no little amount of embarrassment, how our actions in the past put us in difficult situations. Perhaps a relationship we always "had a feeling" wasn't in our best interest turned out to be the psycho-partner from hell. Instead of blaming ourselves, playing the victim, or beating ourselves up for not listening to the common sense in our heads we can choose another path. We can learn from our mistakes, choose a different path next time, and do whatever it takes for us to create change.

As the calendar year ends many of us tend to review the past year, judging or praising our efforts. The result of our inventories gives birth to those New Years resolutions, an attempt to correct the past, hoping for a better year ahead.

This review of our life doesn't have to be an annual event. We have the ability to notice how we are feeling right in this moment and determine what actions on our part earlier today or yesterday helped to create those emotions. That mini life review may reveal how we reacted to the attentions of someone else or a news event in the tumultuous world in which we life. Doesn't that mean someone else is the cause of our joy or unhappiness?

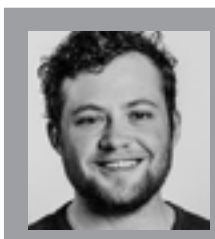
Only we are responsible for how we think and what we choose to feel. No one dictates to us how we are to feel or act, unless we give them the permission to do so. It's by taking control of our own lives, planning for our future, and following through on those plans that moves us in the right direction. If we associate with people who consistently tear us down we don't have to continue that self-abuse. If 24/7 media alerts clutter our thoughts and our lives we can choose to be more selective in how we receive important news. What Kate, Meghan, or some other celebrity wore today is not important news.

Life isn't going to turn out exactly the way we expect all the time. The plus side of that is that when we put universal laws into motion by mindfully choosing our course of action and following through with the appropriate actions, we're often helping to create a future situation that's even better than what we'd hoped for.

It's up to us. You and I have the power within ourselves to affect the changes in our life we desire. All we need to do to start is be willing for that to happen. Then, we take whatever the next step is to move closer to our goal. And the next step. And the next step. And the next step. We know what to do and so we prepare… to accept the life we know is ours.

Dr. Terry Drew Karanen is a retired ordained minister and a licensed social worker in private practice in Carlisle, a speaker, and award-winning author - find his books on Amazon. Contact him at: terry@terrydrewkaranen.com or visit his website at: terrydrewkaranen.com/about. Dr. Karanen recently announced a new location and the expansion of his counseling and consulting practice, TDKM, LLC. Dr. Karanen is skilled in LGBTQI+ issues, addiction counseling, including sex and internet addiction, group support and classes, and mediation. New clients for Individual and Couples Counseling are being accepted by appointment in his new office at 36 South Pitt Street Suite 104 in Carlisle.

An ode to all trans people who have been through it



By Atticus Ranck

Look at how resilient we are. Look how strong. Look at all we've gone through and we're still here.

Every single trans person I know has been through traumatic experiences. Family rejection, healthcare discrimination, job loss, sexual assault, denial of services, substance abuse, and the list goes on. Being trans is hard. It's not "fun" or "trendy." It's not a "new thing." It's not the latest fad. It's repeatedly demanding people treat you like you're human. It's constantly explaining yourself. It's having religion thrown in your face. It's repeating your truth over and over when your grandmother just won't use the right pronouns or name. It's exhausting. Sometimes we hit our limit. And that's when we get mad.

I'm tired of seeing black trans women murdered. I'm done hearing the stories my transmasculine friends tell me in support group about how they have to pick between medically transitioning or their job. I don't want to hear another story about a trans friend who can't stay with their biological family anymore because they make them feel like absolute shit but they don't have any other place to go. Someone called me at work yesterday looking for housing for a "man who identifies as female." So she's a female then.

Know that our resilience only goes so far. We are fighting everyday. And at some point you just get tired. Not only is it exhausting to have to face the trauma of being trans in the real world everyday, but then you come to an LGBTQ+ space, and it's terrible there, too. I'm tired of white gay cis men leading the fight on transgender issues because trans people aren't "articulate" enough or "savvy" enough, or the right skin color, or don't have the education, or they don't dress appropriately, or they don't know how fundraising works, or they haven't been doing this work long enough. It is bullshit. Our real world experiences as trans people more than qualifies us to lead the fight on trans issues. So step aside and let us lead the way. Let us tell you what we need. We know better than anybody how to help our community.

So if you're a member of the LGBQ+ community but you aren't trans, you don't get a pass to ask a trans person personal and invasive questions just because we fall under the same sexual orientation and gender identity minority umbrella. And you don't get to speak for trans people because you have trans friends, or do trans work, or even have a trans partner. And you don't get to tell us what we need or how we need to ask for it to get the respect and humanity we deserve.

If you're trans and reading this, I know you're tired. I know your resilience only keeps you going for so long. I know you need a break from being you. Because I feel the same way all the time. It's okay to get angry, it's okay to be exhausted, it's okay to wish you weren't trans anymore. We didn't get to choose this life. Yet, here we are, fighting anyway.

Atticus Ranck is the Health Programs and Supportive Services Manager for Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center in Allentown.

Is your journey like Star Wars?

(This is the second in a series of stories of my incredible and innovative journey beyond sexual assault. It will hopefully open up healthy dialogues about sexual assault in our LGBT communities)

The Blake Late Show

By Ron Blake

It seems like my journey has elements of the Star Wars opening crawl. It is as though November 12, 2015 was indeed a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. So much better am I because I began (and have continued) this innovative therapy to start openly and often talking about my sexual assault.

And this has all given me the chance to start doing just that: talking about my trauma. One person at a time. One day at a time. That's how you heal from sexual assault and other traumas. Despacito or light speed works just fine. The most important thing to remember is to just keep moving forward each day.

On that autumn day it was then that I walked up to the first stranger I'd meet to get support for all my efforts on this quixotic journey. It has been my therapy to re-engage with society again after isolating so badly from PTSD. Meeting total strangers has become my daily regimen to recovery.

It has been my therapy to re-engage with society again after isolating so badly from PTSD.

Enter Joshua on that pre-Thanksgiving day. He allowed me to walk up to him and share my story with him. I told him what happened on that suicidal night when that moment of laughter changed my life. Thus I explained the significance of Stephen Colbert and my big goal to become a guest on his show.

Joshua is one of the most important people I've met…ever. Had he (the first person) dismissed me completely that day, I might have just given up on this therapy. It could have destroyed all hope that was in me. And that just might have turned me to the dark side for good.

He wasn't dismissive of me though. He used no mind tricks on me to have me go away. He simply listened. And that is incredibly powerful and helpful for survivors of sexual assault. We need people to do just that…listen to us and hear our stories.

Joshua is the only person I've met on this 1,288 day cross country journey who saw a blank poster board. And yet he signed support on that first board for all my efforts to overcome PTSD and get on that show.

His actions said it all. I believe you. I support you. The first two very important steps to help sexual assault survivors as found in the STARTBYBELIEVING.ORG site. (please visit this site)

That first message came to represent something amazing on this journey. It is a moment of fear overcome not once, but twice. We fear what we do not know. I did not know Joshua. He did not know me. He took a chance on me. I took a chance on him.

Many months later, I would meet a group of strangers taking a break outside an improv theatre. I learned something from those guys and gals puffing on their Parliaments that gave me a better understanding of how to manage this thing called fear.

They told me the main tenet of improv is to follow the fear. It is only when you follow the fear that you truly realize the magic on the other side. And these wise Jedi masters passed that knowledge on to me.

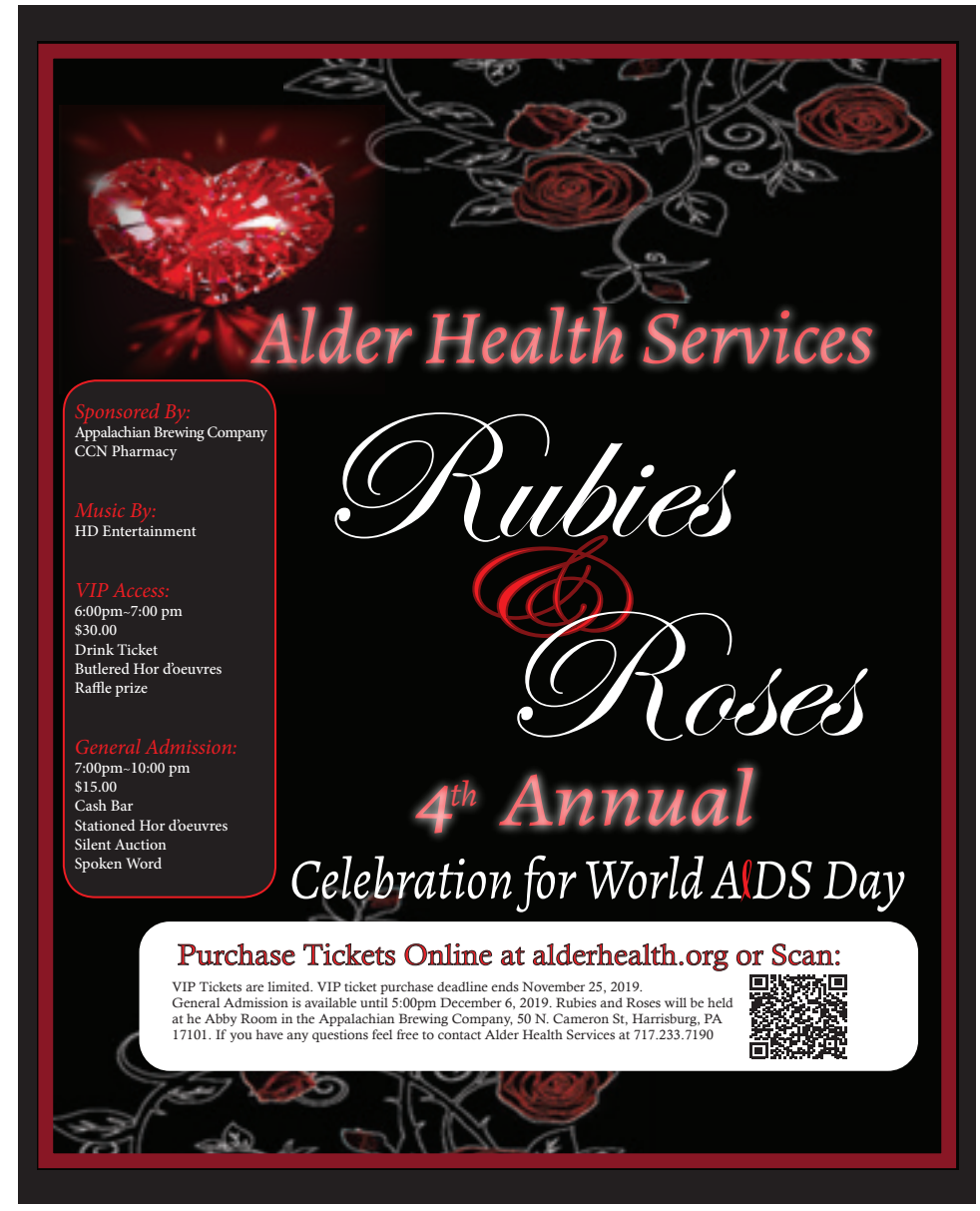
Every day on this journey I've had little reason to use my light saber. Fear was not to be my enemy. I've embraced that fear and used it to make me stronger and find that magic every day. And I've done that now with tens of thousands of complete strangers I've personally met across the U.S. over 1,288 days.

There are now 28,921 moments of fear that have been overcome (twice) and are represented on 443 giant foam poster boards I've carried on this journey to vanquish my Death Star (sexual assault and PTSD) as I also gather support to become that guest on The Late Show.

But I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about THE QUESTION that pops up during this journey. It's a question that can impede the ability for many in our LGBT community to begin healing from sexual assault.

On the 13th day, I took a deep breath and answered the question for the first time. And I nervously waited for a response…

This article of hope and support is brought to you by that guy with a lot more to share. That guy with more stories than the Central Library is Ron Blake. You can find him at Blake Late Show on Facebook & Instagram.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Purchase Tickets Online at alderhealth.org or Scan:
VIP Tickets are limited. VIP ticket purchase deadline ends November 25, 2019.
General Admission is available until 5:00pm December 6, 2019. Rubies and Roses will be held at he Abby Room in the Appalachian Brewing Company, 50 N. Cameron St, Harrisburg, PA 17101. If you have any questions feel free to contact Alder Health Services at 717.233.7190

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The Central Voice takes top advertisng honors

The Central Voice recently won four prestigious awards in the 2019 Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association Foundation Advertising Contest. Press And Journal Publications, CV's parent company, also publishes the community weekly, *Press & Journal,* which won four awards.

The contest recognizes advertising departments across Pennsylvania that "continue to produce outstanding printed and digital classified and display ads, campaigns, and special publications and efforts worthy of much recognition," according to the foundation.

Both publications competed in Division IV.

Press And Journal Publications' newspapers took four first-place awards.

• Best Automotive/Transportation Ad, *The Central Voice*; Lancaster Dodge Ram FIAT.

• Best Real Estate/Builders/Renters Ad, *The Central Voice*; Howard Hanna Real Estate, agent Rob Biancuzzo.

• Self-Promotion Advertising, *The Central Voice;* Promotional House Ad.

• Best Business Building Idea, *Press & Journal*; Press & Journal Big Buck Contest.

The second-place awards were for:

• Ad Campaign or Series, *The Central Voice,* Art Association of Harrisburg.

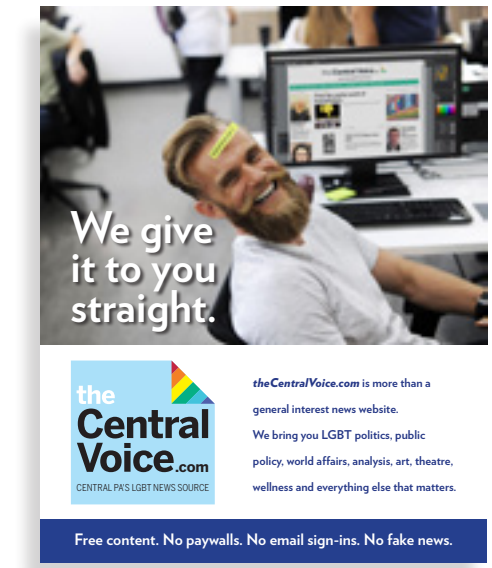
• Self-Promotion Advertising, *Press & Journal;* What's On Press: Penn State (Harrisburg) Guide.

• Best Single Ad, *Press & Journal;* Fager-Finkenbinder Funeral Home & Crematory.

One honorable mention went to the *Press & Journal* for Ad Campaign or Series; Middletown Strites' Orchard

Judges considered the objective, strategy, and result as well as design and attractiveness for all ads.

In 2018 *The Central Voice* received second place for Newspaper of the Year in Division IV and won the General Excellence Award. CV also took first place awards in Advertising Excellence, Diversity and Community Service.


We give it to you straight.
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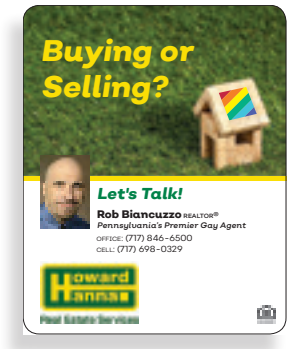
FIRST PLACE
"Self Promotional Advertisement"
TheCentalVoice.com

FIRST PLACE
"Best Automotive/Transportation Ad"
Lancaster Dodge Ram FIAT



FIRST PLACE
"Best Real Estate/Builders/Renters Ad"
Howard Hanna

Art Association of HARRISBURG
Upcoming Events
July 14th, 5-8 pm:
February 22nd-March 28th:
Wanderlust: A Solo Exhibition
Through May 10th:
"Dimensions: Photorealism through Abstraction" Exhibition
May 18th-June 21st:
90th Annual Juried Exhibition
Reception Friday, May 18th, 5-8 pm
May 26-28th:
Artsfest Weekend
Wednesday Club Concerts at AAH
June 10th, 5-8 pm:
SECOND STREET SOIRÉE I
Hosted by David Skerpon & Chris Baldrige. Feat.: Photos, sculptures & paintings.
$45 in advance, $50 at door
June 29th-July 19th:
"Free For All"
AAH Student/Member Exhibition; reception Friday, June 29th, 5-8 pm
June 30th, 5-8 pm:
SECOND STREET SOIRÉE II
Hosted by Mark & Sheri Bennington. Feat.: Photos & paintings.
$45 in advance, $50 at door
Visit www.artassocofhbg.com for more information & Soirée reservations

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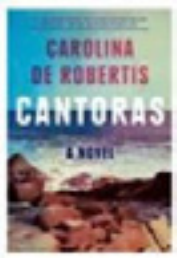
Reading for gifts & pleasure

Dauphin County Library Book Reviews

By Yvonne Carmichael

As the holidays are nearing, here are some titles you might want to check out form your library, ask for as a gift, or maybe give as a gift. Our list includes fiction, memoir, travelogue and history and includes a title for young adult readers. There's sure to be something to be of interest and warm the heart as we move toward winter. Remember, the Dauphin County Library System has even more titles to enjoy. Find out by either visiting us in person or online at www.dcls.org.

Cantoras by Carolina De Robertis



"From the highly acclaimed, award-winning author of The Gods of Tango, a revolutionary new novel about five wildly different women who, in the midst of the Uruguayan dictatorship, find each other as lovers, friends, and ultimately, family. In 1977 Uruguay, a military government has crushed political dissent with ruthless force. In an environment where citizens are kidnapped, raped, and tortured, homosexuality is a dangerous transgression. And yet, despite such societal realities, Romina, Flaca, Anita "La Venus," Paz, and Malena--five cantoras, women who "sing"--somehow, miraculously, find each other and discover an isolated cape, Cabo Polonio, inhabited by just a lonely lighthouse keeper and a few rugged seal hunters. They claim this place as their secret sanctuary. A genre-defining novel and De Robertis's masterpiece, Cantoras is a breathtaking portrait of queer love, community, forgotten history, and the strength of the human spirit." (From the publisher)

Tranny: Confessions of Punk Rock's Most Infamous Anarchist Sellout, by Laura Jane Grace with Dan Ozzi

"In 2012, Grace, the founder, guitarist, singer, and songwriter of the Gainesville punk band Against Me!, came out as transgender, a secret she'd kept for some 30 years in the spotlight. In this riveting and at times harrowing biography, Grace recounts in unflinching detail her path to self-realization. In many ways, Grace's story follows the arc of many rock bios--plenty of drugs, sex, broken marriages, lots of time spent in dingy vans on exhausting tours that left the band penniless and at each others' throats, and, eventually, a major label record contract that left the band disillusioned and in tatters. That story would be enough for a compelling book, but Grace's gender dysphoria adds a remarkable twist to the tale. Bolstering the narrative with years' worth of journal entries, Grace intimately shares her difficult journey--a story not for the faint of heart--as the she deals with her own personal transition, along with the scorn of a reactionary punk scene that resents the band's success and a music industry that wants only to cash in. She survives, and today Against Me! has entered a new chapter." (From Publishers Weekly)

Witchmark, by C. L. Polk

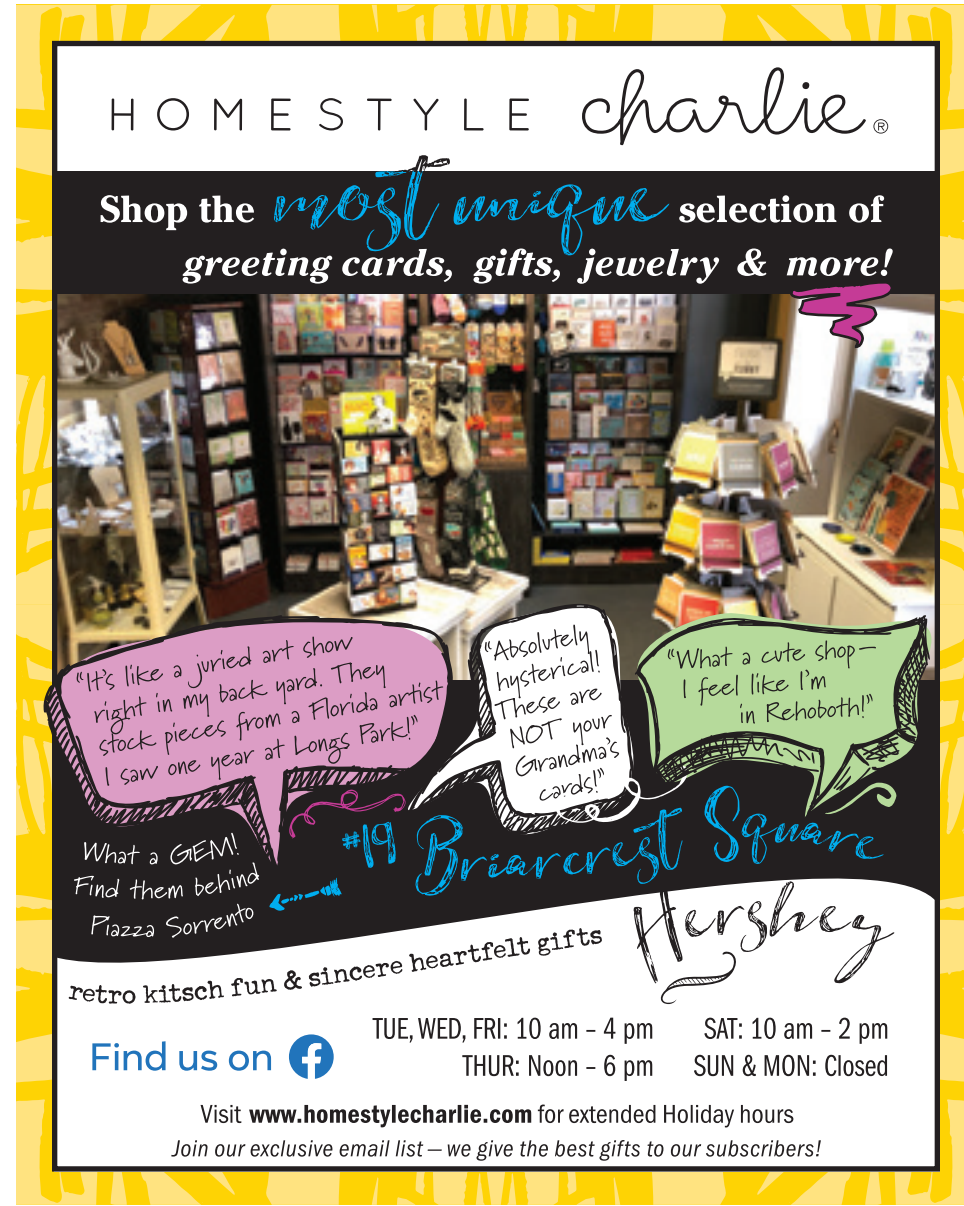
"Polk's stellar debut, set in an alternate early 20th century in an England-like land recovering from a WWI-like war, blends taut mystery, exciting political intrigue, and inventive fantasy. Miles Singer's influential family of mages wants to turn him into a living battery of magic for his sister to draw on. Fearing this fate, he runs away to join the army and make use of his magical healing abilities, although--like all magic-users--he must hide his powers or risk being labeled insane and sent to an asylum. When Tristan Hunter, a handsome, suave gentleman who's actually an angel in disguise, brings a dying stranger to Miles's clinic, the two pair up to uncover the reason for the man's mysterious death. Polk unfolds her mythology naturally, sufficiently explaining the class-based magical system and political machinations without getting bogged down. The final revelations are impossible to see coming and prove that Polk is a writer to watch for fans of clever, surprising period fantasy." (From Publishers Weekly)

The Grief Keeper, by Alexandra Villasante

"What happens when an undocumented immigrant gets caught? With nowhere else to go, Marisol, who is denied asylum, gets pulled into being a psychological test subject for the U.S. government. Marisol becomes the vessel in which the CTS (corticotropin transfer system) takes place, otherwise known as the grief keeper, an experimental study on how one can take on another's shame, regret, anxiety, and grief--a useful tool for the military soldiers coming back with post-traumatic stress disorder. This hauntingly beautiful story is written in first person and dives into the themes of love and heartbreak. It deals with social issues revolving around female/female love and flawed immigration policies. Although the novel is written with simple language, every topic is tastefully handled and woven into the story. The straightforward style gives younger readers a foot in the door into the themes discussed. In the end it's truly about a girl coming to terms with her life and the pain she has gone through, learning not to be ashamed, and discovering how to love." (From School Library Journal)

Real Queer America: LGBT Stories from Red States, by Samantha Allen

"In this clever combination of easy travelogue and thoughtful exploration of queerness in America, journalist Allen retraces her transformation from a Mormon missionary in Utah to a transgender woman living happily in rural Florida. With Billy, her wife's ex (also trans), in the passenger seat, she tours the country looking for what she calls the "real" stories of LGBTQ experience . . . Allen makes the case, bolstered by statistics, that these red-state oases produce tight-knit, supportive queer communities, which can result in measurable happiness. Queer readers will nod knowingly at the descriptions of finding gay-friendly hangouts and questioning whether public hand-holding is safe in a new area, and readers without that experience will still enjoy Allen's charming, humorous recounting of the ultimate road trip through rainbow-colored America." (From Publishers Weekly)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Acceptance comes on many levels

Trans Central PA Topics

By Holly Evans

Acceptance is something that every individual seeks. Whether from your family, friends, coworkers or society in general. As children we seek acceptance by our parents or our classmates in school. As adults we seek acceptance from coworkers, family, friends and society.

For most people seeking acceptance is stressful enough. For gay and transgender individuals this is even more difficult. We deal with the added layer of learning to first accept ourselves. Figuring out why we feel different from that which society expects.

At first, we address this in silence, alone thinking that we are the only person experiencing such feelings, and for most we experience this as a young child or teen. As we outwardly seek the acceptance by society as the individual for which we have been labeled, or identified as at birth, or as the person for whom we are expected to be, inwardly we are silently dealing with the accepting ourselves, with the fact that we are not the person that we outwardly project. For most, this struggle is done with the added fear that those whose acceptance we have garnished through life will now reject us should they ever learn of what we are silently dealing with inside.

> ...this struggle is done with the added fear that those whose acceptance we have garnished through life will now reject us...

As we get older, we continue this struggle. For all, this is a very personal battle on how best to address this inner conflict. Many simply choose to live their lives dealing with this alone, in silence. Others like myself come to a point in our lives where we can no longer live in silence. We come to a point where we must share our internal struggles with those whose acceptance and trust we have spent our entire lives cultivating knowing that their acceptance may now be lost coupled with the question of how those around us, society in whole, will accept us.

I have been fortunate, those most important to me, in my life, have let me know that they love me and accept me for who I am. However, for many gay or transgender individuals this is not the case. This lack of acceptance by family, friends, coworkers and society in general coupled with the internal struggles of understanding our gender identity, or gender preference can foster feelings of loneliness, depression, and even failure. The loss of this love and acceptance by those closest to us at a time of need can be devastating.

If you are reading this and experiencing these very emotions, if you are struggling with how best to discuss your very personal battle, don't be afraid to seek help. Start with finding a support group and speak with someone who has experienced and understands the very emotions you are struggling with. Find someone who has navigated the journey for which you are about to embark upon. I know, as this was so very helpful to me in my struggle with my self-acceptance. What is important is that you speak to someone who has successfully navigated their individual journey. Don't be afraid to talk and seek help.

If you are transgender it is important that you speak to a qualified therapist who specializes in gender identity disorders. It is so important to understand that there is nothing wrong with us and that we, as gay or transgender individuals, are part of a beautiful society and that we are here to add a little color to what would otherwise be an oh so boring black and white world.

We as gay or transgender individuals must also understand that part of acceptance is allowing those closest to us, the time they require to process this information once they learn. Acceptance by family members or close friends is just as personal for them. They too need time to understand and comprehend what we have spent years dealing with in silence. Affording those closest to us the time they need is so important to maintaining their love and support. Don't rush them, be patient. As this love and support is so very important as we begin to express ourselves more openly. If your family is not so supportive or accepting, it is important to then find a few close friends or a support group to be there with you and help you along your way. Having someone to talk to, to lean on is so very helpful.

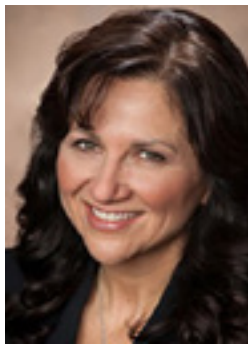
Coming to accept yourself is such a freeing and powerful feeling. No longer worrying about what others say or think. Learning how not to waste emotional energy on the negative comments from those whose acceptance is unimportant allows us to focus on the more important and positive aspects of our lives. For once we come to accept ourselves, it is so much easier to express our self-confidence and to focus on the positive productive aspects of our lives. This very self-confidence in turn projects one's personal self-acceptance and the positive snowball effect only builds upon itself.

Go and take on the day. Smile feel good about yourself; you deserve it. Love yourself for who you really are inside.

LGBT EMPLOYEES from page 1

men to be attracted to women and vice versa, or that a person's assigned sex at birth, male or female, how that person is expected to present, also prohibited by Title VII? The advocates in the courtroom thought the answer was clear and simple.

Professor Karlan pointed out that treating someone differently because of sex is not always discrimination. She explained that the person had to be disadvantaged in some way. She also pointed out that social unrest would not happen if gays and transgender people were protected under the law. When pushed about the right to religious freedom, both advocates reminded the court that the law already provides for religious exemptions. This was a reference to the Masterpiece Cake case that allowed a store owner to not serve or sell a wedding cake to a gay couple because of religious objections to same-sex marriage.



Justices Sotomayor, Breyer, Ginsburg, and Kagan are clearly in support of reading the statute to provide LGBT protections at work.

- Sharon Lopez, Attorney

Both advocates focused their arguments on the text of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which states "It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer … to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's … sex." Some of the conservative justices asked whether it was appropriate to take on the legislative task of amending Title VII via court caselaw. Prof. Kaplan swiftly and deftly retorted, "Title VII was intended to make sure that men were not disadvantaged relative to women and women were not disadvantaged relative to men." Therefore, there is no need to amend the statute.

Several justices focused on concerns about bathroom, and dress codes. Justice Breyer dismissed this line of questioning as a "parade of horribles," and both Professor Karlan and Attorney Cole indicated that those were questions for another day and that these cases were about determining if gays, lesbians, and transgender employees were protected from discrimination in the workplace. Justice Gorsuch referred to prior rulings finding equal protection for the right to marry, but stated "good and decent people" may object to same-sex marriage on religious grounds. Asserting her seniority, Justice Sonia Sotomayor interrupted him, asking when the Supreme Court should intervene to stop "invidious discrimination." She said gay people are still being fired just because of their sexual orientation. At what point, she asked, do we say that Congress did address this? Many of the attorneys in front of me turned to each other and nodded. She was saying what we were feeling.

The employer advocates were represented by Attorney Jeffrey Harris, Attorney John Bursch and U.S. Solicitor General Noel Francisco, who support the position of both the employers permitting the termination of the two gay men and the one transgender woman. They argued that the job expanding the statute was in Congress' authority, not the court. Justice Kagan reminded them that the plain language of the statute prohibited sex discrimination, and that the need to amend the statute is not clear. The advocates countered that the broad interpretation was not intended by the original drafters. Justice Ginsburg reminded the advocates that sexual harassment was not in the original statute either, but sexual harassment is broadly accepted as proscribed behavior.

The newest member of the Court, Justice Kavanaugh, only asked one question, which did not tip his hand.

Justice Thomas did not ask any questions, but his judicial philosophy is to not ask questions of the advocates.

Justices Sotomayor, Breyer, Ginsburg, and Kagan are clearly in support of reading the statute to provide LGBT protections at work.

Justice Alito expressed enough concern to allow me to conclude he would not support an opinion that found such protection for LGBT workers. Justice Thomas has voted with the conservative Justices in the past, so there is no reason for him to depart now.

In order to prevail and find protections for LGBT workers in Title VII pursuant to the sex discrimination clause, either Chief Justice Roberts or Justice Gorsuch will need to vote with the liberal block. I do not hold out much hope for Justice Gorsuch. It may all come down to Chief Justice Roberts. My hope is that he will view the statute using the plain language of the law as his guide. If Congress disagrees with the decision, they can vote to amend the statute. All this is happening in an election year. as most of the big decisions of the Court are usually issued at the conclusion of the term, the end of June 2020.

Once the decision is made, I will report on the application of the ruling on the LGBT community. The cases have been submitted. Stay tuned!

Pennsylvania still has no statewide LGBT non-discrimination protections.

Life, liberty and happiness for all?

Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons

We end 2019 in a state of high anxiety as we wonder what 2020 will bring politically and how the struggle for social justice will play out this time around. How can things get worse, right? And yet we know they can.

It will take courage and hard work to stay in the fight, and we must. It is a time more than ever to keep the faith.

Recently the New York City Council repealed a ban on conversion therapy after the Christian legal organization Alliance Defending Freedom filed a lawsuit contending that the law "was a textbook violation of free speech and the right of individuals to pursue the lives and identities they want to exercise."

The group was saying that it is fine for people to pursue the identities they wish to have, as long as they are straight and Christian. Council Speaker Corey Johnson explained that the council decided to repeal the ban rather than having the lawsuit being upheld by the conservative majority in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Johnson, and New York state senator Brad Holyman, both of whom are gay, believed strongly that the decision was necessary because, as Holyman put it, "the legal climate is less favorable at the federal level for the LGBTQ community." How quickly the climate changes.

This is but one example of the complex and challenging landscape we will face in 2020. A great majority of Americans say that we support free speech, that we follow the tenets of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. We believe in the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We say we believe in the Constitution's "We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility … and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." Well, we are the Posterity.

I've been reading Harvard historian Jill Lepore's latest book, These Truths: A History of the United States. (In my view, it ranks right up there with Howard Zinn's A People's History of the United States, published in 1980). And yes, I've written about that important work in this space before.

Lepore explains that she wrote this book because she believes history "is not merely a form of memory but also a form of investigation to be disputed, like philosophy, its premises questioned, its evidence examined, its arguments countered."

For example, the statement, "We hold these truths to be self-evident," as Thomas Jefferson put it, "was the language of reason, of enlightenment, of inquiry, of history," writes Lepore. She sets out to determine just how well we have done in living up to these truths, using the above language to the best of her ability.

From the very beginning, we Americans have argued about what "these truths" mean, and Lepore's discussion of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution is a concise study of the paradox of our founders writing about freedom and justice for all while at the same time condoning slavery, disenfranchising women and non-propertied white men and so on.

Her book is full of specific anecdotes that make her point. In 1783, while serving in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, James Madison struggled with what to do about a slave he owned named Billey. He eventually sold him to a Pennsylvania Quaker.

Lepore also gives the struggle for LGBTQ rights its due, beginning with her observation that identity politics goes back to the early days of the Republic when black Americans were counted as three-fifths of white Americans. She notes over a century of struggle toward abolition, emancipation, suffrage and civil rights after the Lincoln-Douglas debates, during which Stephen Douglas stated that the U.S. government "was made for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever."

From its beginning then, the citizens of the United States have differed greatly on what "these truths" mean, which brings us back to 2020. It's our job to fight back at the continuing attempts to reverse the flow of American history, uneven as it has been. We must keep the faith.

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CENTRAL PA'S ONLY LGBT DIRECTORY

LINKING ACTIVISTS & ADVOCATES

York Region collaborates to organize Resource Center

By Tesla Taliaferro

"The LGBTQIA+ Resource Center is a touchpoint - a safe space and hub for all of the amazing but previously unlinked activism in the York region," says founder and Board president Vicar Carla Christopher.

The Resource Center as a hub was born out of York's inclusive answer to the question How to acknowledge and celebrate Pride?

What evolved is a series of venues known as the Equality Fest family of events. The series includes Equality Fest (August), Equality Fest Jr. (May), Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil (Nov.), and other vigils, celebrations, and emergency responses prompted by events.

The ground-level need for the Resource Center grew out of numerous email requests for individual assistance. Over time and in an organic fashion, a virtual Resource Center run by a few individuals who put their shoulder to the wheel of community organizing operated for almost two years. The virtual evolved into the physical as those individuals, formal and informal groups realized their next step was developing a physical safe space.

May launch

That space was launched last May, when much needed and welcomed LGBTQIA+ Resource Center formally affiliated with the York Jewish Community Center's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Social Justice (IDEAS) Center.

"Now the Resource Center operates in a transitional space. We have a physical office to raise awareness in the community and to liaise on events, activities, and trainings, Christopher explains. "However, a lot of offsite work still occurs, especially virtually," she notes.

Christopher acknowledges that while the current office now "shows up on the radar," it does not completely fulfil the role of a typical queer space with large lounges and private group session space. However, she says, the board is actively working with the Jewish Community Center and their shared partners to address how to positively move forward on developing a private office where people can meet with volunteers and conduct closed-door sessions.

Philosophy matters

"There is lots of individual inspiration (in York) to start things, but there is little support and it's always hard to get the word out," realized Christopher.

During its formation, the Resource Center board focused on the center's 'philosophy," asking if the entity should be a content creator or a hub of information. "There is lots of individual inspiration in the York region to start things, but there is little support and it's always hard to get the word out," Christopher realized. Given the already outstanding work of many community organizations, including programs such as the long-operating PFLAG York, Planned Parenthood's The Curve, newcomer Spectrum York, and the local Gay-Straight Alliance's operating at both Martin Library and many educational institutions, the board agreed, as a start. to function as an informational hub and event coordinator to the York region. They will also identify program, service, and information gaps and determine how to best address them.

Since forming, the Resource Center has completed training to entities aspiring to become queer competent and affirming, including the York City's Department of Health, and adoption agencies, faith communities, and medical doctor and therapist offices. "We have also worked with commercial downtown stores and outlets and local non-profits such as the Human Relations Commission, our partner the Jewish Community Center, and the YWCA to become more affirming, equitable, and inclusive of queer folx," Christopher conveys.

Part of the Resource Center's foundation requires a reorganizational movement from grassroots to an intentional organization. That includes the need to reverse roles - where the Equality Festival will become a mission of the LGBTQIA+ Resource Center, rather than the opposite. Eventually the two will have separate though coordinating boards. Beginning in 2020, the Resource Center hopes to have a specific strategic plan for growth, a mission, and a vision.

"Our goal is to make a more affirming York County through celebratory, safe space, and educational events," Christopher assures. The Resource Center intends to do such through continuing to provide event coordination, advocacy, individual resource referral, cultural competency workshops, diversity training sessions, as well as business and organizational meetings, she explains.

The Resource Center is also looking for ways to increase partnerships in the community and regionally, including LGBT Center of Central PA for training facilitators to provide programs and generating new groups.

Vicar Christopher "sees our mission to empower other folx, but we need more resources and marketing, in hopes to provide scholarships, training opportunities, direct service needs, and to build further capacity at the Resource Center."

As part restructuring, the Resource Center will seek more funding sources. While not currently a 501c3, or nonprofit registered organization, the entity currently has multiple fiscal sponsors and organizes numerous annual fundraisers through those sponsors, which include restaurants such as The Handsome Cab and The Cove, as well as religious organizations including Union Lutheran Church and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, in addition to private businesses and donors.

"The Resource Center has also been blessed to receive thousands of in-kind financial contributions through advertisements and in-house printing services which helped to support the funding of the festivals and the virtual center," Christopher says. However, the organization's board recognizes that they will need a whole other level of funding for the physical center they now work to maintain.

Providing a physical space does not require only financial backing. It also requires people power.

The Resource Center currently has a dedicated but small group of volunteers that hold open office hours, as well as

Please see **RESOURCE CENTER**, page **XX**

MICHAEL CARROLL from page 9

first. But when I write I have to admit I think more about Tennessee Williams. I was flattered by the description. Williams was unafraid. And I don't want to be afraid. I want to be outlandish and absurd and sad and dark. I want to be fun and unexpected.

The title story is based on Williams's novella The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone, where Karen is a disgraced actress whose husband takes her on a world tour and dies on the plane from Paris to Rome. She stays in Rome and falls in with a louche crowd, and falls in love with an impoverished aristocrat.

In my story, Karen dies on the flight down from Ohio and Dale moves into Fantasy House and goes on a fuckfest. He's retired and wealthy so there's nothing holding him back. I trace their past together; she always knew he preferred men. My editor, a woman, made me put back in a finger-fucking flashback I'd taken out thinking it was maybe too much.

CV: Any changes in your writing from first book to second book?

MC: My first book still had one of my feet in the narrative-arc form and structure, even though I was attempting to abandon it. The unities of time and place still held slightly, presaging my almost complete abandonment of them in Stella Maris. I just got tired of being confined. I wanted the freedom to shift anything I wanted to, setting or point of view or mood or topic. Which really fit for a book on Key West that's heavily populated. One minute in a story you're in one head, then you're in another. You're not supposed to do this. Most of my straight white male friends are appalled, or would be if they tried it themselves. But you know what? Must-see TV and film have changed all the conventions for fiction, as far as I can tell.

CV: Do you still write regularly at your favorite Chelsea bar in New York City?

MC: I wrote three of the stories, the last three, at Barracuda. Then a young guy wanting a mentor came blowing through my life and basically ruined that for me. I don't want to go into the specifics; he's a man I loved, un-sexually, and had great feelings for. But he embarrassed the hell out of me. Not exactly his fault. Some old unresolved issues.

CV: What's important for readers to know about your short stories.

MC: I'm excited for short stories. I love the form because you can endlessly experiment as long as there's good surface tension and some unity of action and character.

One of the stories in Stella Maris exemplifies to the extreme my desire to go nuts experimentally. Thematically it's way out there: an unsolved double murder, that never gets solved. Trumpian armies of tourists. And, of course, a character based on me, living in a drydocked houseboat in the middle of the island. Memories, poetry, sex, outrage, politics, the filth and indignity of being human. That's my sweet spot!

CV: How did all of this go over with your editor?

MC: It takes a great editor who's willing to take chances. I pledged my loyalty and organized most of my own publicity for Ruth Greenstein, because she really didn't have the resources to send me around the country: she was until recently a one-woman operation. I thought the sex and the feckless structure would daunt her and she'd demand changes. Nope. I bet not a lot of bigger New York publishers would have tolerated my formless meandering and lyrical blathering. It moved me that she was willing to give me a long leash.

CV: What's the state of literature? Gore Vidal often complained that no one reads anymore and that was decades ago.

MC: I don't know where literature is right now, or what its place will be in our culture in the near future, but it takes risk to be any good or in any way influential.

CV: What's next?

MC: I'm writing a dystopian novel set in Fire Island in a Pines collective, with flying motorcycles and vampires and a theocracy and virtual deepfake reality shows. One character, Edmund White, shows up after a long disappearance uploaded into the body of a twenty-something sex worker, and Michael Carroll is paunchy and sixty. (Carroll and White are married.) It is told from different points of view. It began as a novel about my mother, which my wonderful writer friend Xan Price told me I had to finish. I went to Fire Island to pick it up again, on page 55. And soon, it evolved into a dystopia. It's called *Am I Your Lover?* I wrote two hundred-and-something pages this summer, mostly in the Pines.

YOUTH CONGRESS from page 1

tax-credit program that would allow for scholarships for more underprivileged students to have a choice of schools.

How is her visit relevant to PYC?

"The elementary school she is visiting has a specific policy banning transgender students and staff," Goodman said in a news release. The story had been highlighted the day before her visit by the Huffington Post and CNN.

In response to Devos' visit, PYC announced convening their second Pennsylvania Trans Student Roundtable for late October. The roundtable brings together trans youth leaders from throughout the state for an in-depth meeting discussing how to make schools safer for transgender students. The first roundtable was held in 2017 several days following Secretary DeVos' decision to rescind Title IX guidance that protected transgender students. "Through these statewide gatherings, trans students will be able to provide formal recommendations for local and state policymakers on how to ensure all Pennsylvania schools are safe and affirming", Goodman added.

"As a young transgender person, the fact that Sec. DeVos held a gathering on the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit at a private school that has an explicit anti-trans policy is extremely telling and concerning to me," said Preston Heldibridle, PYC State Policy Associate.

"I can appreciate the need for alternatives to a traditional public school education – I was home schooled for a time and my siblings are currently home schooled. However, public funds should not go to schools that have discriminatory policies and practices against LGBT students and staff," Heldibridle said at the time of DeVos' visit.

Goodman added that DeVos' visit "highlights the urgent need for why Pennsylvania must pass comprehensive LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination protections."

Speaking of Pennsylvania being the only Northeast state without statewide LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination protections, this year, Sen. Pat Browne introduced Senate Bill 224, Rep. Dan Frankel introduced House Bill 1404, and Sen. Larry Farnese introduced Senate Bill 614.

With similar language, the bills provide basic civil rights for queer and transgender individuals. Pennsylvania has had similar legislation introduced for the past 20 years. And that's where all activity stopped, despite continuous efforts of various organizations. This legislative session, PYC is helping the effort through their campaign, Pennsylvania Values. "This important effort is coordinating the widespread public support for this legislation, as we urge our lawmakers to take action," Goodman says.

"We need to get this done," openly-gay State Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta told *The Central Voice* in a related story. When Kenyatta talks to his legislative colleagues, he said he finds support expressed verbally "but then I find no action, no follow through." He could not get support for a resolution honoring the 50th anniversary of Stonewall which took place this past summer.

"I realize Pennsylvania is a huge, rural state with cultural differences and two large urban areas – Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. But polls show that Pennsylvanians support equal civil rights" for the LGBT community.

In fact, polls show that voters across Pennsylvania overwhelmingly support LGBT-inclusive policies and are less likely to vote for a candidate who does not, according to The Human Rights Campaign and Equality Pennsylvania (now defunct). For both organizations, Hart Research Associates one year out from the 2018 midterm elections conducted polling that showed "the data clearly show that Pennsylvanians overwhelmingly support LGBT equality," JoDee Winterhof, HRC Senior Vice President for Policy and Political Affairs said at the time. "These polling results make it clear -- hate is not a winning political strategy."

Openly-gay PA State Rep. Brian Sims said that he drives through "four zones getting from home to his seat in the General Assembly. In two, I have protections. In two I do not. I have protections depending on where I stop my car. I think we've had enough."

LGBT-inclusive civil rights protections make for good public policy and the details surrounding Devos' visit highlight why, Goodman says. "The moment public funding flows into a private school, they must be held to basic public policy standards, such as equal access and protection for all. That is what we do in a civil society."

In order to achieve a more civil society, PYC has been directly involved in headline grabbing legal cases.

When six Boyertown students said the transgender-inclusive policy violated their privacy rights and constituted sexual harassment in violation of Title IX, a federal law that bars discrimination based on sex in educational institutions that receive federal funds, PYC intervened in the case to defend transgender students. Through advocacy with their lawyers at the ACLU, this year the United States Supreme Court ultimately let the lower court's decisions affirming trans student inclusion in Boyertown stand without also issuing any comment, thereby continuing the school district's policy allowing transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identity, according to Goodman.

"We're absolutely thrilled that the Supreme Court chose not to review the case," Goodman told *CV* at the time.

With the US Supreme Court now about to hear three significant cases that could advance or push back LGBT civil rights, who knows where the work of PYC may lead.

To learn more about the Pennsylvania Youth Congress and to get involved, readers can visit payouthcongress.org.

To learn more about Pennsylvania Values and the work to advance LGBT nondiscrimination protections in the General Assembly, readers can visit pavalues.org.

Outside federal court in Easton following oral arguments in the Boyertown case with Pennsylvania Youth Congress Executive Director Jason Landau Goodman, PYC State Policy Associate Preston Heldibridle, Boyertown Area Senior High (BASH) GSA Vice-President Gabby Rogers, and BASH alum Aidan DeStefano.

FAB AWARDS from page 11

LGBT Center of Central PA, where she served as Nominations and Development Chair, Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President. Shaashawn just completed a year of service as the Co-Vice Chair of Governor Wolf's Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, the first commission of its kind in the nation. Shaashawn served for two years as the Director of Equity and Affirmative Action & Staff Liaison to the Harrisburg Human Relations Commission (HHRC) for the City of Harrisburg. As of September 3, 2019, she will serve as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with Stephens College, an all womyn's college; her undergraduate alma mater.

Shaashawn is on a mission to connect people to people and people to information by taking private conversations public, practicing the art of getting comfortable being uncomfortable especially when defensiveness and awkwardness show up. During her 20 years in Harrisburg she has strived to make every space she graces more diverse, equitable, and inclusive for all.

RESOURCE CENTER from page 20

an energized taskforce of individuals looking for funding opportunities, and an ever-growing board to assist in the reorganization and promotion.

Consequently, the Resource Center offers training for those interested in becoming a resource coordinator to help run the operation. The Resource Center gladly accepts donated LGBTQIA+ gently used books for their lending library, as well as historical items and memorabilia, and queer-created or centric art pieces.

To get involved or contribute to the Center, please reach them by emailing equalityfestyork@gmail.com.

Tesla Taliaferro is a board member of the LGBTQIA+ Resource Center and a founding member of Spectrum York.

When, where - York LGBTQIA+ Resource Center

The York LGBTQIA+ Resource Center is located within the IDEAS Center at 15 N. Cherry Ln. York, PA 17401. The entrance is inside Cherry Lane Park, at the NE corner of the park, in the alcove near the stage. Parking is available at metered spaces on the north side of the park or in the Philadelphia St. Garage or on W. Market, N. George, or W. Philadelphia streets. Open office hours for the LGBTQIA+ Resource Center are Tuesdays and Saturdays from 10 AM - 2 PM.

For more information on how to support the Resource Center - www.equalityfestyork.com.energized taskforce of individuals look

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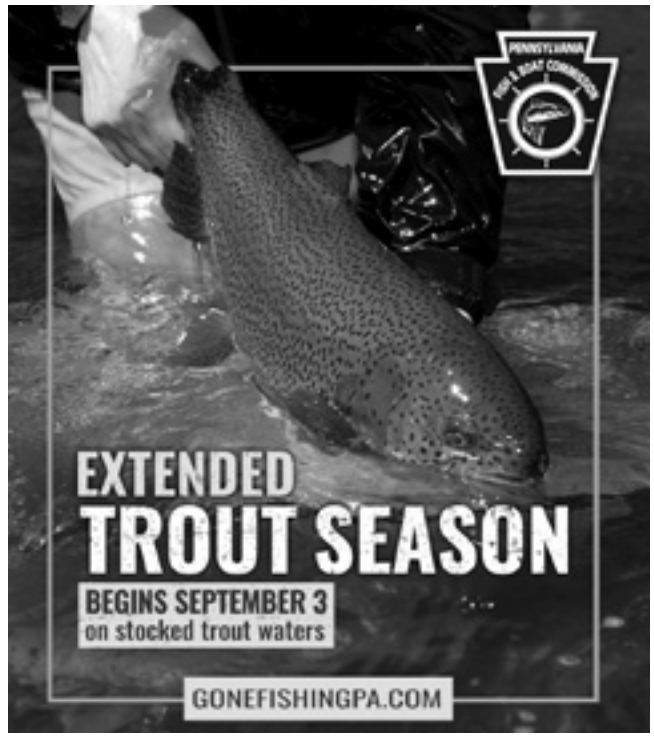

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Pennsylvania Capital-Star and The Central Voice to share news content

By The Central Voice

As of Oct. 3, *The Central Voice* and the *Pennsylvania Capital-Star* will share editorial content.

"Part of the mission here at the *Pennsylvania Capital-Star* is to elevate the important voices that aren't always heard as loudly as they should be in our public dialogue. And certainly, the voice of Pennsylvania›s LGBT community is one that should be heard," the online news outlet›s editor, John L. Micek, said.

The *Pennsylvania Capital-Star* is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news site dedicated to honest and aggressive coverage of state government, politics and policy. The media outlet is part of The Newsroom, a 501(c)(3) public charity that supports similar news organizations in 11 states as well as a bureau in Washington D.C.

> "Our readers... are as concerned as anyone else, about the workings of state government, politics and policy."
>
> - Frank Pizzoli

"Our readers are interested in, and are as concerned as anyone else, about the workings of state government, politics and policy," said Frank Pizzoli, founding publisher and editor, *The Central Voice*. "This content sharing arrangement advances our goal of being a more 'intersectional' media source. Regardless of who we love, we all live in this world together," Pizzoli said. "Good government and good policy are inclusive."

"We appreciate the opportunity to forge this union of cooperative journalism in South Central Pennsylvania," said Joe Sukle, vice president of *The Central Voice's* parent company, the *Press & Journal*. "Certainly this shared platform of stories between *The Central Voice* and the *Pennsylvania Capital-Star* will further our publications' continuing efforts to serve our readers and advertisers as we both strive to enlighten, expose and challenge through accurate news reporting and insightful commentary."

OUT & ABOUT

Here's some things that happened in Central Pennsylvania

HARMONY WALK

A celebration of cooperation among religions in Harrisburg area

About 100 people participated Sept. 15 in Harmony Walk, a celebration of cooperation among religions in the Harrisburg area. The walk brings together people of many faiths in harmony and peace and includes Jewish, Christian, and Islamic houses of worship. People of all religions, including Buddhist, Baha'i, Hindu, Sikh, and those of no specific faith were invited to attend. At several stops along the walk, leaders share words of wisdom about the values of unity and harmony. Participating were Goodwin Memorial Baptist Church, St Paul Episcopal Church, Madeline L Olewine Library, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church, Wesley Union AME Zion Church,

Kesher Israel Congregation and Ahmadiyya Muslim Community - Hadee Mosque. The walk was sponsored by The InterReligious Forum of Greater Harrisburg and The Interfaith Center of Greater Harrisburg.

FAB FABULOUS!

Center director thanks participants

From Amanda Arbour, executive director, LGBT Center of Central PA on the center's annual FAB fundraising event entitled Celebrating a Legacy of Resistance & Resilience! - "Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for FAB 2019: Celebrating a Legacy of Resistance & Resilience! It was an inspiring evening as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Stonewall and honored those who are carrying on this work today - Ciora Thomas, Shaashawn Dial, Dr. Katharine Dalke, Ely Taylor & Kay LaFaille, and the GLO Youth Advisory Board. Many thanks to our Corporate Allies PPO&S, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, Hershey Company, UPMC Pinnacle, TE Connectivity, Morgan Stanley, Penn State Health, and Highmark. Thank you to our FAB 2019 Sponsors The Foundation for Enhancing Communities, Hamilton Health Center, and *The Central Voice*. Thank you to our volunteers, staff, and Board of Directors! We look forward to seeing you all again next year. "

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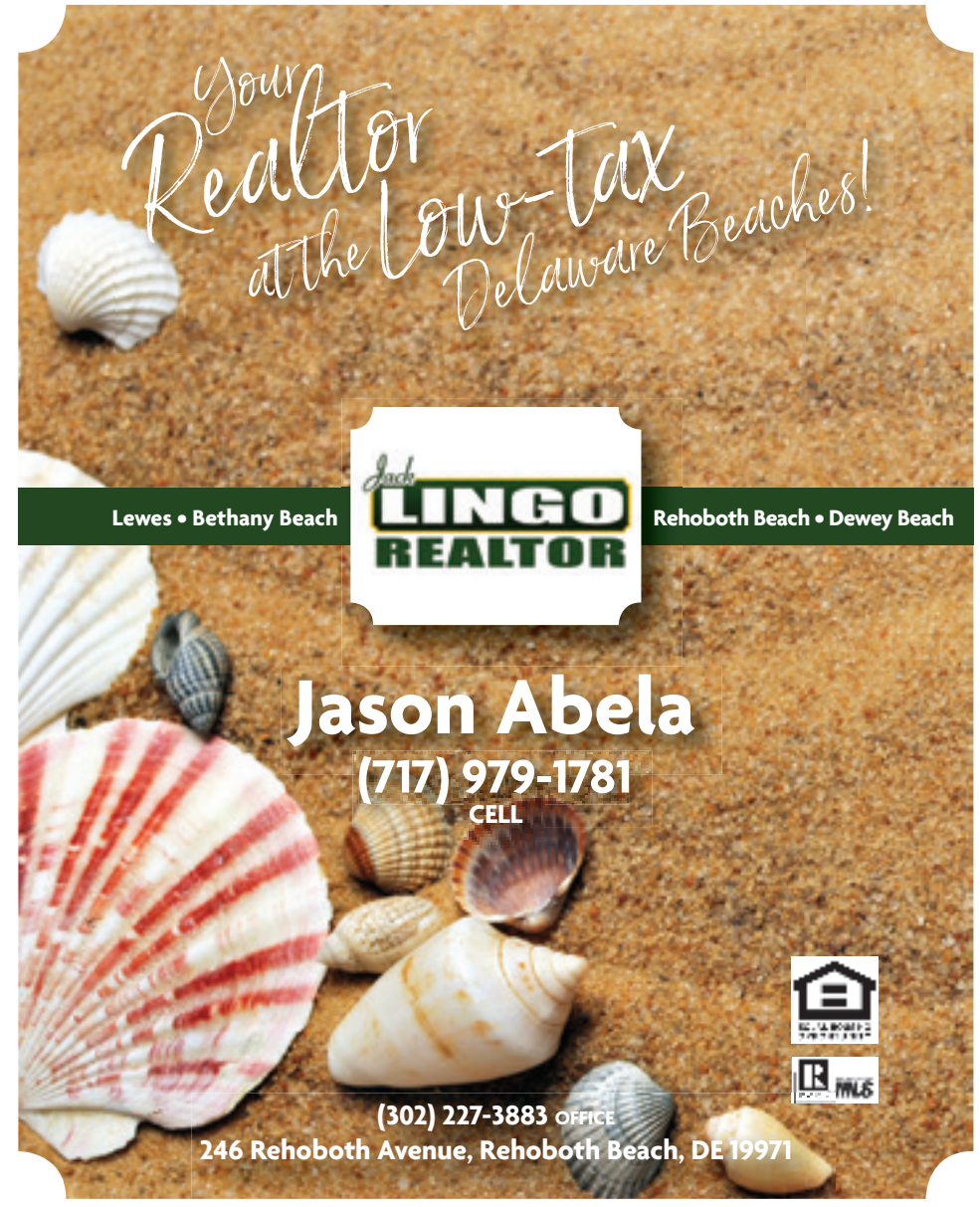

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